



THE UNITED CHURCH
IN JAMAICA AND THE
CAYMAN ISLANDS

*Congregational
Disciples of Christ
Presbyterian*

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OUR VISION: "Touching
Lives, Nurturing Disci-
ples, Seeking Transfor-
mation through Christ"

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PRAY FOR:



- **Rev. Bevis Byfield**
who is not well
- **Rev. Ranford Hewitt**
who continues to recover
from illness
- **Rev. Dr. Margaret
Fowler** who is not
well
- **Rev. Royland Thomp-
son** who is not well
- The family of **Malique
Lawman** of Bellevue
United Church, who has
passed on
- **Bunny Neil**, whose
son, **Jason**, has passed
on

UCJCI UPDATE

A WEEKLY NEWSLETTER OF THE UNITED CHURCH IN JAMAICA AND THE CAYMAN ISLANDS

Volume 4: Issue 20

Wednesday, December 5, 2018

UNION SUNDAY MESSAGE!

Once again, it's **Union Sunday**. Once again, we light the union candle, and briefly recall that between 1965 and 1992 three denominations covenanted to journey together as one.

We may also briefly recognise that our history did not begin in 1965, but that we have over 200 years of faithful witness to our Saviour, whose advent we now commemorate, and whose coming as **God with us – Immanuel** – signalled the single most important event in human history.

This is an opportune moment for us to look back to the past, be discerning in reading the present, and diligently strive towards the future at the same time – for all three hold keys to ministry that matters.

The past offers us roots, reminding us of our participation in history, proclaiming the gospel in word and deed. The past also reminds us of our mistakes from which we learn, and on which we build, as we seek God's will in this world.

The present screams at us, but let us not be overcome with soundings of fear. Terrorism

remains a persistent and significant threat to businesses, governments, and individuals. We are now witnessing the highest number of displaced peoples on record worldwide.

Greenhouse gas emissions are rising leading to global warming which, left unchecked, will affect food and water supplies, health and could make islands disappear. HIV/AIDS and other diseases threaten life; crime, greed-fuelled lottery scamming, government corruption, child abuse, and human trafficking... the evils are too many to mention.

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Bradley Taylor lights the Union Candle at King's Gate United

Symbols of the Union at King's Gate United Church

UNION SUNDAY MESSAGE

(Continued from Page 1)

The enemy of our souls shouts 'Fear!' and uses that fear to fuel hopelessness for the future.

But on this **Union Sunday**, I would like us to see the future differently. We are stewards who have been entrusted with the weighty responsibility of bearing the good news in the midst of the realities of the present, and notwithstanding the realities of the present. I invite you to envision a future which is different. Let us together believe we can live in harmony with the natural environment; that we can live at peace with those who disagree with us, that human life can be valued again and men, women, and children treated with dignity. Let us hold fast to the certainty that love will conquer hate. This is not a pipe dream, it is a solid vision, which is **Christ's vision**, "*I have come that you might have life—life in all its fullness.*"

Because of **God with us – Immanuel** – we can reach back into the past to draw from it the strength of our history, with wisdom assess the challenges of the present and walk boldly into the future, knowing that our God is still on the throne, is still calling us to proclaim the gospel in word and deed, and calls us to touch lives, nurture disciples and seek transformation in partnership with God. United Church family, this Union Sunday, let us seize this opportune moment.

– Rt. Rev. L. Christopher Mason, Moderator



Various Auxiliaries participate in the lighting of the Union Candle at King's Gate United Church

UCJCI FAMILY AD CORNER

PROCEEDS IN AID OF THE SPANISH TOWN INFIRMARY



#38

BEHOLD OUR
MESSIAH

@

RIDGEMOUNT UNITED CHURCH
DEC 9, 2018 | 4:00 PM

MINISTER: REV. ANTHONY CHUNG

Designated Charity of the Singphony:

Woodlawn School of Special Education

Send comments and news about your congregation to: ucjiupdate@gmail.com

LEADERSHIP CORNER

Connecting New Church Members

What do people feel in your church? Do they leave your church no better than when they walked in the door? Do you have lots of new people and yet your church doesn't grow? Do just as many people walk in the door as those who walk out the back door?

Take a look at these seven (7) tips and ask yourself where you rate in each area.

COMMUNITY: When we think about connecting, what people are truly looking for is Community. Community is a place where people can know and be known, love and be loved, celebrate and be celebrated. How does your church help people find community? This can be done in many ways.

The most common ways churches do this is through small groups or Sunday/Church school. Regardless of what your church does, rate yourself not only in how people find community, but what happens in the community. True community helps people stick to your church.

OWN THE VISION AND PASS THE PASSION: The only way for your church to know and feel the passion for connecting people, is for you to model what you want. Because the people God sends to your church really matter, instill in your people the desire to do the basics for when new people come to your church.

What should these basics be? It starts with being friendly. Before you go to your friends after church, go to someone you don't know and say "Hi" to them. If you see someone out in the parking lot, walk up and welcome them. Go up to people and get to know them—good chance you will have something in common. It is in the sim-

plest day-to-day activities that you can model to people that new people to your church matter.

NEVER GIVE UP ON THEM: Because Jesus cares for lost people, it should drive us to make sure that at any cost we are getting people connected. What could be blocking you from making sure this is happening? Are you focused on each person that comes up on your radar to get them connected? Are you training someone in your church to see that these people get follow-up?

NEXT STEPS: At every event, a person's next steps should be clear. People are looking for guidance. Let's not make them guess what their next step should be. We are to be a light to people, not a fog in their journey. Make the path clear so they can get connected. Have it spelled out in your printed material, on the web, and in your verbal communication from the pulpit.

If you aren't clear or you are unsure, you can guarantee a visitor or new member won't have a clue. If you think your communication is clear, have an unsaved friend read what you think is clear and see if they agree. So often we put "Christianese" in our documents or use words that our church people know, but that a visitor wouldn't.

EMPOWER OTHERS: Give people in your church the responsibility to connect others. When people feel the responsibility to reach out, something happens. The people will become your army. They have the connections.

CUSTOMER SERVICE: We are on the earth to serve our customers—the lost, the un-churched, the sheep God has sent to our church. When your church plans an event to connect people, or develops a pathway for people to get connected, make it easy on them. Take the burden totally off them and put it on you. If the best time to get people connected is on Sunday morning, connect with them on Sunday mornings. If the bulletin is the best method to sign people up, use the bulletin.

THEY ARE YOUR FUTURE: New people know other new people. They say that when you first become a Christian, you know 50 un-churched people. However, by the time you have been a believer for 10 years, you know 5 un-churched people. Whatever the numbers, for most Christians, the longer we are a believer the more we don't know unbelievers. What might be the solution? As believers, let's make a conscious effort to always be in the path of unbelievers. Also, each new person in your church has a network that they can influence Christ. Let's network with the people God sends us. When we see one visitor, let's see 51!

Whatever the case, how we treat people, God's most precious creation, should be our driving force. Let's fulfill the call to help people prepare for eternity.

Source: "7 Tips for Connecting New Church Members" by Steve Gladen



The **WRMC UCYPF** was installed on December 2, 2018 at Farm Heights United Church! They are from left: Tamoia Swaby, Public Relations Officer; Tahjae Atkinson, Sports Coordinator; Javin Cunningham, Sports Coordinator; Tiana Forbes, Cultural Coordinator; Mikayla Taylor, Financial Coordinator; Javain Spence, Secretary; and Michalia Wright, President. Absent from the photo are: Sudeen Davis, Vice President; and Shamari Blake, Evangelism & Discipleship Coordinator.

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