



THE UNITED CHURCH IN  
JAMAICA AND THE  
CAYMAN ISLANDS

*Congregational  
Disciples of Christ and  
Presbyterian*

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**OUR VISION:** "Touching  
lives, Nurturing Disciples,  
Seeking Transformation  
through Christ."

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#### PRAY FOR:



Pray for Mr. Leroi  
Lorde, whose son Mi-  
chael passed on.  
Thanksgiving Service  
will be held on Satur-  
day July 29, at Mead-  
owbrook United  
Church at 10 am.

# UCJCI UPDATE

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

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## NERMC MINISTERS BUILD CAPACITY!



Ministers and Lay Pastors of NERMC (L) attend RDGS Rev. Henry Samuels at (R) and Rev. Taylor 2nd Right.

**I**t was a 'full house' at the Board Room of the Webster Memorial United Church when Ministers and Lay Pastors from the Council, met for a **Capacity Building Workshop** held on July 12, in obedience to its mandate to continue the equipping its ministers and full-time Lay pastors. Guest Presenter, the **Rev. Dr. Burchell Taylor** a renowned Bible Scholar, (2nd R); from the Bethel Baptist Church, led the interactive and informative sessions, as the topic of **"Eschatology"** was explored. In positing that

Eschatology has to do with **'the last things'**, referring to the end of the present world order and the ushering in of the new world order, Rev Taylor made the point that **'the present is perishing and passing away, but that the new is imperishable'**.

The entire story of humankind implies eschatology, he stated and that it **has to do with God: who God is, what God does, how God does what God does, and is implied in the story of salvation.**

In fact, he said, central to eschatology is Christ Jesus the Lord, who brings to a climax the unfolding of the promise of God. **Jesus introduces the eschaton!**

"Ever since the coming of Jesus the last day has been set in motion. We are living in the last days", said Rev. Dr Taylor.

**God is sovereign and in control;** he maintained, pointing out that though the powers of evil have already been defeated they have not yet been vanquished; but that though the powers of evil are mighty, they are 'not almighty!' Eschatology demands of us a distinctive **spirituality**, enabled and engaged and characterised by **discernment and dedication**. The marks of this spirituality are: **Watchfulness and alertness Faithfulness and endurance resistance and resilience, Witness and purposefulness** for an end time of **accountability and vindication.**



**70:**

**Rev, Selvin Gray**  
July 25,

**Rev. Hyacinth Edwards,**  
July 26.

**Rev. Harry Bodden &  
Rev. Royland Thompson**  
August 2,

## CAMP NEWS

### THINGS TO REMEMBER

**There are still some camp groupings to come!**  
**Coming to an end is:**

- **Pacesetter Teens**  
(also known as Teens 1)  
July 22 - 29, 2017

### Still to come are:

- **Discovery Teens**  
(also known as Teens 2)  
July 29 - Aug 5, 2017
- **Youth Camp -**  
August 5 - 12, 2017
- **Young Adults Conference -**  
August 17 - 20, 2017

## THE CHURCH'S FINANCES

**A comprehensive look at the Church's finances reveal, some reasons to celebrate, and other indications requiring careful observation and action!**

### **The Central Fund Contribution - High Compliance!**

**We continue to celebrate the 30% of income principle and the high compliance rate of over 90% in 2016. The ministers, pastors and congregations must be commended for their efforts towards this end.**

### **Amnesty**

**In an effort to collect the arrears accumulated prior to the 30% principle as well as with a few congregations which are still below the 30% of income, an amnesty with two options were offered to congregations in 2016.**

**A few congregations/charges made use of the options offered but this did not yield the desired outcome of collecting at least 50% of the over \$18 million arrears as at the end of 2016. In fact, our conversations with charges were centred on write-offs and reductions in the central fund contributions.**

### **Challenges**

**Both Jamaica and the Cayman Islands have had significant financial challenges over the last two years which continue to impact giving among the congregations. While we were able to offer a 5% increase in 2016, the information from the Jamaican Regions indicates that Central Fund Contributions for 2017 will be remain at the same level as 2016.**

**Given the tax challenges and the indicated numbers we are unable to increase Jamaican stipends and salaries for 2017.**

**The UCME has been established and already has made some gains in the objective to provide the Synod with additional revenue from the entities**

**its contribution to the Synod budget in 2017 by \$5million over 2016. This, however, has been offset by the write-offs and the reductions in the central assessment commitments for the same period.**

### **Need for Tithing**

**At the risk of sounding like a stuck record, the call for us to become a 'tithing Church' cannot be ignored or placed on the back burner, -for it is a tithing church which will ensure a true commitment to our stewardship and that will ensure our ability to provide the necessary and livable compensation for those who minister and work sacrificially at all levels of our church.**

**If we are not able to address this critical matter, until the medium term expectations from the UCME kicks in then we will have to consider other models of ministry which will allow for time-specific pastoral engagements allowing for ministers to seek part-time employment.**

### **Taxes**

**The Synod has been served with a tax claim close to \$2 million for benefits including housing and manses and the use of motor vehicles by ministers for the year 2013. This matter is yet to be concluded and the dialogue with the Tax Administration Department continues.**

**This period of our history challenges us to pause at the crossroads of our times and remind ourselves of the destination towards which we journey, captured in our vision statement – "Touching lives, nurturing disciples, seeking transformation through Christ." The next Synodical period affords us the opportunity to pause at the crossroads of uncertainty to reflect, assess, determine and then commit to the paths which will allow us to give life and energy to missional identity of this great church in our nations. May God grant us the wisdom and the courage required for the journey. ■**