IN TIMES OF ECONOMIC MELTDOWN

by Erica James-King

• Fill my cup

Christians and non-Christians were assured that they could face the austere global economic recession and other difficult realities with renewed hope and enthusiasm if they give priority attention to God in their lives. President of the Jamaica Baptist Union (JBU), the Rev. Dr. Stephen Jennings issued the challenge while addressing thousands of Baptists on the final day of the JBU Believers' Convention & 159th General Assembly held at the National Arena on Sunday, February 22, 2009.

Urging people everywhere to come and "drink of the rivers of Living Water - the Holy Spirit", in recommitting their lives to Christ, the Rev. Dr. Jennings implored, "We all need a fresh infilling of God's Holy Spirit because we live in a world of crisis." Referring to John 7:37- "Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink" - the JBU President stressed that the solution to the daily storms of life, which overwhelm is daily surrender to God, the source of empowerment.

The President cited the "failure of the formal religious system to deal adequately with the needs of the people and the crisis of the times". He pointed out that the church in Jamaica has been deficient in meeting the economic, social, psychological and spiritual needs of the people. Drawing a parallel to the situation in contemporary Jamaica and the circumstances affecting the people of Israel, reflected in John 7, Dr. Jennings declared that there are many Christians and non-Christians who feel stressed, oppressed, depressed and alienated from God and their loved ones.

He lamented the many instances of deterioration in our relationship with God and with our fellowmen, and that that has caused an increase in crime, immorality, mental illnesses and emotional problems. "For many of us, even though we are in church this morning - when we leave here, we know we are going to face the crisis back at home," the Rev. Dr. Jennings bemoaned. "We know we need from God something to enable us to face the crisis," he added.

Observing that some Christian leaders and workers in the church have become spiritually dry, Dr. Jennings cautioned, "We can be so busy doing the work of the Lord that we don't take time out and say: Lord, I am running dry." He appealed to citizens to take time for introspection, examination of their circumstances, commitment and the necessary action, "drinking from the Living Water for our thirst". He underscored the need for us to surrender to Christ, risk identifying with God and God's people, and to trust God in the midst of our circumstances.

EMPOWERED FOR ENGAGEMENT

Dr. Jennings' charge under the theme, "Fill my Cup", resonated with that of the Rev. Dr. David Coffey, President of Baptist World Alliance and preacher at the afternoon Service of Commitment, which brought the curtains down on the General Assembly. Speaking on the theme, 'Empowered for Engagement', Dr. Coffey asserted that even though we are faced with overwhelming circumstances, God is still in control and still at work in and through the lives of His people.

Using Luke 4:14-30 the BWA President outlined the similarities between Jesus' time and ours. He indicated that as in Christ's era and now, we are invited to partner in work and ministry with God by remaining undaunted by the challenges of this world, sharing God's Word unashamedly, displaying godly courage and transforming the world by our transformed lives.

Dr. Coffey reminded Baptists: "Even as we engage others, we are mindful that we, too, have need for this God whom we proclaim." He advised that we would be empowered for engagement only if we realize that God has a special purpose, which includes taking our brokenness and transforming it into a thing of beauty.

During the Sunday morning service, it was announced that the Rev. Cawley Bolt, pastor of Sligoville-Ebony Vale Circuit of Baptist Churches, is the President-Elect of the JBU and will be installed as President during the 160th General Assembly in 2010. Two new churches were also formally welcomed into the Union and given the right hand of fellowship. They are Waugh Hill Baptist in St. Catherine and Snow Hill Baptist in St. Ann. They bring to 322 the number of Baptist churches in the Union.

Under the theme, "Living in the Spirit", the JBU Believers Convention & 159th General Assembly started February 18 with thousands of Baptists and friends meeting for worship, fellowship and evangelism at the Ocho Rios Baptist Church and Sunset Jamaica Grande in St. Ann, ending on the February 22, at the National Arena in Kingston. Guests included Baptists from the United Kingdom, United States of America, St. Vincent & the Grenadines and Panama.
BOLDNESS AMIDST THE ODDS

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." (NIV) Acts 1:8. In February 2009, the Jamaica Baptist Union, in its 159th General Assembly and Believers Convention, celebrated the theme, “Living in the Spirit”. As we reflect upon the times in which we live, this theme poses a challenge to us as believers inasmuch as the local and global social, economic and political situations challenge us. How is this so? We wrestle with the kind of response that we ought to make, as citizens of Jamaica, to the various socioeconomic situations, which are confronting us. We consider the proposed solutions to our economic crisis here in Jamaica such as wage freeze, gas tax and salary cuts, among other measures. We think of the summit in Trinidad and Tobago and what President Obama can do for us as Caribbean and Latin American peoples. We continue to look for political messiahs who can give us as a people for some time to come. To that end, we are hoping to look at restructuring aspects of the life of the JBU in a bid to achieve greater efficiency and effectiveness in ministry and mission. Pray, therefore, for a spirit of clarity, conviction and cooperation to prevail among us as we seek to move in response to the prompting of God.

Until we meet again, let us, therefore, keep praying for one another; and let us keep pressing on. God bless you.

The President's Message

My Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Greetings in the name of our Leader, Jesus of Nazareth.

I greet you with a sense of joy, as we praise God for the favour He has shown to us during our recent Believers Convention and the 159th General Assembly. When we consider the fears, doubts, and negative comments that came from some persons that it “couldn’t and shouldn’t be done”, we are truly grateful that the Lord helped us to have a blessed time in Ocho Rios and, later, in Kingston. Many persons from all over Jamaica, and elsewhere in the world participated in a rich time of worship, fellowship, teaching, training and witness; as together, we sought to be and were “renewed by the Spirit”. To God be the glory. Our thanks - as a leadership - to you, our fellow saints of the JBU. After being on that ‘mountain of transfiguration’ with the Lord, the question might be asked: What next? The answer would have to be back down in the valley of everyday life where people and problems await us. (See Mark 9:2-32.) The important thing is to know that the Lord is with us still and that “the God of the mountain is the God of the valley; the God of the day is the God of the night”. Thus in the valley of job cuts and wage freezes; of crime and violence; of personal disappointment and national anxiety, the Lord is still God and He is still with us, helping us to deal with the unclean spirits of life.

As the administration of the JBU, we stand committed to the sustaining of our spiritual fervour in these challenging times; and in ways as to help us through, the Triune God brings about the religious, psychological, social, political, economic and ecological transformation that is needed for our country, region and world. We are determined that “New Wine, New Wineskins” be seen not merely a sermon topic for one week but, rather, be sensed as the Lord’s direction for us as a Union and a people for some time to come. To that end, we are hoping to look at restructuring aspects of the life of the JBU in a bid to achieve greater efficiency and effectiveness in ministry and mission. Pray, therefore, for a spirit of clarity, conviction and cooperation to prevail among us as we seek to move in response to the prompting of God.

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Citation

Reverend Dr. Vivian Panton, M.A., D. Min.

"Progress lies not in enhancing what is, but in advancing toward what will be." (Kahlil Gibran)

When the JBU became aware of him, he was an outstanding young man in his hometown and at the Wallingford Baptist Church in St. Mary. Jamaica's Independence inspired in him a desire to serve his nation and so the Jamaica Constabulary Force beckoned. On leaving the Training Academy, he was assigned to May Pen and then to Lionel Town; but a passion for ministry ignited him. Subsequently, Constable Vivian Panton applied to the Jamaica Baptist Union (JBU) to become a Minister. He was enrolled at the Calabar College in 1965. He was graduated in 1969 and ordained in the Wallingford Church. That signalled the beginning of almost 40 years of service as a Minister of the gospel.

The Pastor

Our brother and minister served the Salter's Hill/Lottery Circuit of Baptist Churches until 1981 when he responded to a call from the Oracabessa Circuit where he served until 1990. The early days in St. James were formative and exciting and the stories tell a tale of sacrifice, energy, enthusiasm and an earnestness to serve God.

He and his wife, Norma, transported the Circuit's young people to schools in Montego Bay when bus fares were hard to come by. Many testify that Dr. Panton sought to build human lives by tutoring youngsters to pass their JSC and GCE exams, even making provisions for those unable to read and write to secure private education. He also had a penchant for creating beautiful houses of worship, proven by those in the Salter's Hill/Lottery and Oracabessa Circuits.

After Dr. Panton became pastor of the Oracabessa Circuit in 1981, he enriched the quality of the worship services and established a counselling and care centre—the first of its kind in that region—as well as a skills training centre which enabled scores of St. Mary residents to obtain employment.

He ministered with a sense of dignity, attracting many people to the churches he pastored. Gentle—indeed, he was—but for some, quite stubborn in his convictions.

The Academic

Dr. Panton pursued studies at the graduate level. He was awarded the Master of Arts and the Doctor of Ministry from Princeton Seminary. That study, along with his experiences,

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THE JAMAICA BAPTIST REPORTER

Official publication of the JAMAICA BAPTIST UNION
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Rev. Merlyn Hyde-Riley

We invite you to continue to submit your articles, stories, and comments to the above address or email.
FROM THE DESK OF THE GENERAL SECRETARY

We are now into the second quarter of 2009 and one wonders, as we are prone to do the older we get, where has the year gone!! Much has happened in the preceding months that have already tested our mettle as a country and denomination. We Baptists remain unswerving in our resolve to face these times with the distinctiveness of people of the Spirit.

This year began with the world’s eyes focussed on what was being dubbed the worst global financial/economic crisis since World War II. The economists and financial analysts have warned that no one will be unaffected by this crisis and the experts have been fulsome in recommending survival strategies for those who will become the castaways of a system designed with only the ‘bottom-line’ in mind.

The Officers and Executive Committee of the JBU continue to spend time contemplating the likely impact on us as a faith community, and have recommitted to being models of kingdom living, even more so in these times. This was part of the President’s message as he met with leaders in Regional Conferences last November. He urged each congregation to bond together to ensure that no member of the family is left behind and gave practical suggestions to this end.

In fact, in the same vein, we call on our beloved country to rediscover a spirit of community marked by a solidarity which will truly leave no one behind. Notwithstanding the challenges ahead, there are enough resources available for all to be kept afloat if we remember that we witnessed the Women’s Federation, many clothed in their signature white, marching into the town of Ocho Rios!

And what a time we had on the Friday evening when an estimated 2,000 persons gathered in Turtle River Park to listen to the preaching of the Rev. Davewin Thomas and the music ministry of young Jamaican gospel artiste, Nicholas Eccleston (DJ Nicholas)!

The other group to whom we owe a debt of gratitude is that contingent which really serves as the church’s eyes and ears. This small group of Baptists has invested countless hours, giving up several weekday evenings, their Saturday mornings (and even one or two Sunday afternoons) in the task of planning our General Assemblies. I have had the extremely good fortune to have them as part of the team and I wish to recite their names: Celia McKoy (Bethel, Half-way-Tree), Dorrett Thaxter (Tarrant), Yvette Johnson (Tarrant), Michael Taylor (Bethel, Half-way-Tree), Patrick Smith (Bethel, Half-way-Tree), Norva Rodney (Kitson Town), Merlyn Hyde Riley and Arlene Henry (both of the JBU Centre).

Scores of our young people will journey to the Bahamas to share in the Caribbean Baptist Youth Festival. Let’s pray for safe travel for them and that they will return renewed and (re)energized to live as God’s children in a country and world that has lost its moral centre and compass.

As many of you should know by now we lost one of our retired ministers since our last publication, the Rev. Winston Sylvester Clementson. We pay tribute to him elsewhere in this issue.

Speaking of upcoming events, many persons have been asking about the Baptist World Alliance’s Congress scheduled for Hawaii next July (2010). Information pertaining to the arrangements for the Jamaican delegation is being collated and will soon be disseminated. Please note the dates however, July 27 through to August 3, 2010, inclusive of travel days.

One of the highlights since we last spoke to you through this medium was the staging of our historic Believers’ Convention & 159th General Assembly held from February 18-22, 2009. Elsewhere in this Reporter you will read and see images of some of the happenings of that event. Suffice it to say, we can only but thank God that there was much more to celebrate than commiserate!

From the evaluation forms, personal communication and anecdotal experiences it is clear that there were many high points of the Believers’ Convention & General Assembly, but none more so than the Mission Blitz on the Thursday afternoon and the Open Air Evangelistic Meeting on the Friday evening. Words will never be able to adequately describe the sight, sounds and feelings that gripped many of us as we witnessed the Women's Federation, many clothed in their signature white, marching into the town of Ocho Rios!

During the convening of the 159th General Assembly the delegates, believing that they were led by the Holy Spirit, invited the Rev. Cawley Bolt to be the denomination’s President-Elect for 2009 to 2010. Our brother, who has had considerable experience in the leadership of the Union having served as Associate General Secretary, General Secretary and Baptist Warden at the United Theological College of the West Indies, is pastor of the Sligoville/Ebony Vale circuit of Baptist churches. He is also one of the two sitting vice presidents. We urge you to pray for him, his family and the congregations which he pastors, as they prepare themselves in heart and mind during this year to serve the Union.

There are so many persons who gave of themselves to making sure that things fell into place and I would like to pay tribute to two such groupings even while we say thanks to all. Special commendation to the Local Arrangements Committee (LAC) which was headed by the Rev. Johnathan Hemmings, Pastor, Ocho Rios Circuit of Baptist Churches. They demonstrated such a spirit of hospitality and commitment and went the extra mile to ensure that all was in place for that region’s first ever experience of hosting the most anticipated event on the denomination’s calendar.

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LIVING IN THE SPIRIT - SALT OF THE EARTH
Jamaica Baptist Women’s Federation
by Clover Jarrett

The Jamaica Baptist Women’s Federation (JBFWF) is committed to the reaching out and touching lives through its programmes and projects, which include:

- Annual Retreat to evaluate its programmes, and to introduce new ones.
- Ongoing Leadership Training.
- Implementation of plans for the construction of the Half Way House.
- Individual branches continued contribution to the construction of the Half Way House.
- Culinary Art Competition among the parishes to be held in June.
- Ministering to needs in various circumstances.
- Telephone Counselling
- Parenting

The Federation is also involved in partnership with other Women’s Groups:

- South Carolina Baptist Women’s Union – JBWF President and Secretary will be guests at their Annual meeting on March 25, 2009.
- Caribbean Baptist Women’s Union – Their conference will be held July 13-16, 2009 in Barbados.

Representatives from the JBFWF will attend.

At the women’s Sectional Meeting of the JBU Believers Convention & 159th General Assembly, the theme for the panel discussion was “Living in the Spirit - Salt of the Earth”. As salt of the earth, women are to be active, creative and redemptive, as God is expecting them to take their stance in society. The topics discussed were:

(1) Children are our future – treat them right; (2) Good parenting form the start; (3) Women – living in the Spirit, making a difference; (4) Family for Jesus.

The panelists posited that: (a) Children are God’s gift to us and so we must care for them. (b) Begin preparing for parenting right from the start by building the foundation on solid trust. (c) Parents must be committed to each other. (d) Women who wish to make a difference surely need to have an encounter with God. (e) The encounter will enable them to speak boldly against the abuse of other women; mentor the young (f) Healthy lifestyle includes the spiritual, physical, educational and social aspects of an individual’s life. If these are practiced on a daily basis, the whole person will be ministered to.

After the panel discussion, the women, adorned in white with banners and carrying various messages, marched through the streets of Ocho Rios. They were led by a drum corp. As they marched, the women handed out gospel tracts to hundreds of people. If one person experienced a life-changing situation as a result of the march, the exercise would have been worthwhile. Those who were unable to march stayed in the church and prayed. The entire experience was great. To God be the glory.

9TH GRADERS ENCOURAGED
by Lance Fisher

Amid horrendous stories of baffling violence and apparent loss of ambition among our youth in schools, the JBU Youth Department decided to “tek it to dem”! This action was part of the activities dubbed the “Baptist Blitz”, packaged in the JBU Believers Convention & 159th General Assembly in Ocho Rios, St. Ann, on February 19, 2009. Visiting Ocho Rios High School and meeting with the 9th Grade students was a blessed opportunity for sharing in the missional efforts of the JBU on the occasion of its General Assembly.

The Grade 9 classes are separated by gender and so we divided into six groups, also according to gender, one group per class. We chatted and joked with the youth; we shared our experiences and the lessons we were learning from life. We shared with the 9th graders the wonderful changes, which we were experiencing through the transforming power of Christ, and we encouraged them to allow Christ to improve their lives also. Our message included an exhortation to stay focused on matters of current importance, and to endeavour to live good and decent lives.

The school community received us warmly. The students engaged us with liveliness and energy, their brightness and ambition evident in their eyes and in their speech. The staff members were happy to have us and they were particularly accommodating from the start of the planning to the end of our visit that day.

We rejoice concerning the three young ladies who committed/recommitted their lives to Christ during our visit. We are also very thankful for the opportunity to have visited the school. We believe that God continues to work, even where we cannot see the results.

What a privilege to be used by God to pour good things into the lives of other youth! We pray God’s continued grace in using us like this more and more.

WALKING WITH GOD - A NEW MINDSET FOR JUSTICE
Jamaica Baptist Union Brotherhood
by Owen D. Crooks

The General Assembly on February 18-21, 2009 served to reinforce the Jamaica Baptist Union Brotherhood’s (JBUB) thrust to engage men in meaningful community outreach projects. Tangible projects which will not only benefit the less fortunate, but also will serve as a focal point of encouragement and identification for the men to be our brothers’ keepers.

The Brotherhood’s Sectional Meeting was held at the Ocho Rios Baptist Church Conference Centre on Thursday February 19, 2009. Over 100 Brothers representing all 14 parishes attended. The guest speaker was the Rev. Jonathan Hemmings. He gave a charge to the men and led the installation of the 2009 Executive. After the meeting, the men participated in the “Baptist Blitz” on the streets of Ocho Rios. The day’s theme was “Walking with God - a new mindset for justice”.

Activities included community-oriented initiatives. We believe that the areas of Health and Education are fundamental to productive human beings and set the stage to break the vicious cycle of poverty, disease and ignorance to which so many of our young people are exposed. All the projects were identified well in advance and work started on some of them prior to the start of the Conference.

1. At the Ocho Rios High School, a group of women and one man from the Female Prisoner’s Welfare Project (HIBISCUS) in Kingston shared their testimonies of trafficking of cocaine to the United Kingdom, and the consequences. Three batches of students (two shifts) totalling 600 young people and several staff members benefited from this experience.

2. While these sessions were in progress, a tangible project which will not only benefit the less fortunate, but also will serve as a focal point of encouragement and identification for the men to be our brothers’ keepers.

3. About 70 Brothers participated in a drug trafficking presentation by the HIBISCUS team. This generated lively discourse on the scourge of trafficking hard drugs.

4. At the St. Ann’s Bay Infirmary, each of the 116 residents was given a care package with toiletries. All joined in a very warm spirit-filled fellowship. The St. Ann’s Bay Brotherhood has undertaken to continue with the Infirmary as a parish project by planting trees and generally enhancing the aesthetics of that environment.

5. At the Great Pond Basic School, the men repaired the roof and removed and replaced a portion of the ceiling. We give God thanks for all that He allowed us to experience through these projects which left us feeling that the interactions will make a positive difference in the lives of those whom we touched.

Baptist World Alliance Men’s Day of Prayer
The primary focus is now on the upcoming Baptist World Alliance Annual Men’s Day of Prayer set for April 25, 2009. All parishes have been directed to experience through these projects which left us feeling that the interactions will make a positive difference in the lives of those whom we touched.

Members of the brotherhood test out new benches at the Ocho Rios Health centre

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- South Carolina Baptist Women’s Union – JBWF President and Secretary will be guests at their Annual meeting on March 25, 2009.
- Caribbean Baptist Women’s Union – Their conference will be held July 13-16, 2009 in Barbados.
At the beginning of another administrative year of the Jamaica Baptist Union (JBU) and in the atmosphere of an ever deepening global economic down turn, many Christians might be wondering if the JBU will be able to continue its Mission Explosion through its 320 congregations and with our partners in Panama, the Turks and Caicos Islands; Haiti and St. Vincent and The Grenadines. The mission of Jesus Christ is possible or impossible depending on Christians' commitment, willingness, availability, spirituality, righteousness and holiness. When Christians totally give of themselves, and all that they have, the mission will touch people where they are and in ways in which they need to feel the presence of God. The JBUMA wishes to foster this Christian attitude, which will always cause the mission to be possible, never impossible.

As we look ahead and wonder, we must not be daunted. We should be inspired and encouraged by the following:

- The day after the Portland tragedy that led to the loss of fourteen lives, the JBUMA, through the local JBU pastors, was on the scene with offerings such as counseling, grief and trauma support, water, tarpaulins, mattresses and money.
- The tears of joy and gratitude flowing down the cheeks of three ladies when they each received one tarpaulin from us after the passage of Hurricane Dean.
- The words of exclamation: "Tank yu lawd Gad Almighty, mi naw sleep pon di floor tonight" - from a child downtown when he received a mattress from us, after fire gutted his parents' dwelling place.
- The words and smiles of pride and appreciation on the faces of adults and children in Kingston Gardens (at the JBU Health and Outreach Centre) and in 100 Lane & Park Lane, Red Hills Road, Kingston, to see that "sophisticated people like dem Baptists" remember them, care about them and treat them like somebody. The JBUMA also supports and sponsors the football team of seventeen youngsters from 100 & Park Lanes; distributes food and assists the children with lunch money and schoolbooks.
- For the past two years, amidst struggles, stress and trials, the JBUMA has sent a group of Baptist young men, who play football, to Virginia, USA, to do Sports Evangelism. We hope to do it again in July 2009.
- The achievements of our training arm, TDM (Training in Discipleship and Ministry Programme), are encouraging. Over the past three years, over 150 men and women were trained. Some are now giving pastoral oversight to the Longville Park, Ginger Ridge, Hope Hill, Stewart Town, Staceyville-Cowley, Grants Pen Mission, Richmond Vale, Kellits, Point Hill, and Arcadia Baptist Churches.
- The purchases of land and the construction and renovation of church buildings. For example, Balaclaya, Belle Castle, Christiania, Fellowship/Mill Bank, Golden Spring, Kellits, Mount Nebo, Tangle River, and Whitehorses Baptist Churches. To name a few.
- Educational assistance through grants and scholarships; for example, the children of 100 and Park Lanes and Kingston Gardens; youngsters of JBU Sunday Schools and Youth Fellowships; and persons of our regional partnership churches (Panama, Trinidad and Tobago, Haiti).
- The work of Mission Volunteers.
- The establishment of a least two more health and outreach centres.
- Assisting churches across the island with hosting health fairs.
- Sponsoring the mission in Sports Evangelism to Virginia, USA; to Boys and Girls Championships and to other major sporting events across Jamaica.
- The provision of more resource material, amenities and equipment for the JBUMA Resource Centre.
- Subsidizing the three mid-term regional mission conferences.

Mission Possibility will definitely be realized when all pastors, deacons and members of our churches are committed in word and action to the mission of Jesus Christ through the JBUMA.

To maintain the Mission Fund there is an urgent need for pastors to be willing to allow the JBU to deduct no less than JMD$500.00 per month from their salaries; churches to be willing to give no less than JMD$1,000.00 per month in their Global payments, and individuals to give no less than JMD$100.00 per month to the JBUMA Mission Fund. The Fund will be used to provide a monthly stipend, building construction, feeding school children, re-afforestation. It is not the language barrier. It is not the Rev. Basil McLeod going for four and half months and significantly advancing the mission to the extent that when he was leaving on February 15, 2009, the people almost prevented him. It is not the mission team members wishing that they had the winsomeness or the indomitable spirit of the Haitian people. It is the Christlikeness and sense of call to the cause of Christ that the Haitians have. Whenever a team goes, the members find it difficult to leave - the tears, the sadness - words can hardly explain.

- The two Schools of Evangelism at the Nutshell Conference Centre which had over 80 participants who are now excited and bubbling with joy and zeal for the work of Evangelism and Discipleship in their churches.
- The eight circuits of the JBU across the island which received over JMD$600,000.00 and eight disaster repair teams from Virginia, USA, following the passage of Hurricane Dean.
- The 5th George Liele Lecture, October 2008, at the Philippo Baptist Church, which was well supported by Baptists from all over Jamaica.
- The mission partnership between the JBUMA and groups such as the Lott Carey Mission Agency; the Praying Pelican Mission teams; the American Baptist Churches Convention (ABC); and many and others.
- The over 100 JBU members who have enlisted as Mission Volunteers to assist the churches of the JBU in aspects of the mission.
OPENING & DEDICATION OF BETHEL'S NEW BUILDING

by Rupert Gallimore

On Sunday, 23rd November 2008, Bethel Baptist Church, new owners of the former JBU building, located at 6 Hope Road, Half-Way-Tree, opened and dedicated the building. The event was coupled with an observance of the church’s 54th anniversary.

The pastor of the church, Rev. Dr. Burchell Taylor, led the service. His wife, Mrs. Ann Taylor did the ceremonial act of the opening of the front door to the building by cutting the ribbon.

The building houses the Bethel Healing Ministry, Reading Lab/Homework Centre and Corporate Offices.

The worship service continued in the chapel and was led by the Church Secretary, Deacon R. Karl James.

The preacher, JBU President, the Rev. Dr. Stephen Jennings, spoke from 1 Chronicles 29:10–20. In a penetrating message, he emphasized the following:

—Buildings help to make evident the rule of the eternal God on earth a memorial, reminding us that God is still here.
—Buildings represent our response to God’s goodness to us.
—We give recognizing that we are to live in obedience to God. We serve the Lord by serving others.

Rev. Merlyn Hyde-Riley greeted the congregation on behalf of the Jamaica Baptist Union; and Deacon Ronald Daley, in similar fashion, represented the Kingston and St. Andrew Baptist Association. Bethel’s Associate Pastor, the Rev. Michael Shim-Hue, was also present.

At the conclusion of the service, Sister Clara Briscoe and Brother Malique Dawkins cut an anniversary cake.

GREETINGS AND UPDATE

God’s faithfulness to me continues to be great as I ponder the marvelous miracle, which has kept me alive since the event of May 26, 2008. The outpouring of love and concern from all sectors of my beloved Jamaica Baptist Union and beyond has exceeded my wildest dreams, and God continues to answer the prayers being offered on my behalf.

I joyfully report that with the medical care I have received from day one to the present, my progress is steady and I am benefitting from the virtue of patience. The pulmonary embolism problem has been controlled and I am now off the blood-thinning regime.

After eight months, the cast/splint has been removed from my upper left arm and it is hoped that I won’t have to have surgery done on it. I continue to wear the magnetic pulse machine to stimulate growth of the bone. I cannot say how much longer this will take. My walking is much steadier and I continue the physiotherapy process. It will take several more months for me to know if the major surgery to correct the paralysis on the right side of my face is successful. The nerve graft which was done grows at the rate of 1 centimetre per 10 days and I am now feeling sensation below the nose.

Hearing is totally lost in the right ear but I thank God for what I have on the left. My family joins me in sending love to my Jamaica Baptist Union and the wider community that may read this.

THROUGH THE VALLEY WE GO AND “WITH CHRISTS, WE CAN”

George V. Simpson (Rev. Dr.)

JERICHO BAPTIST CHURCH

175 YEARS OF MISSION AND MINISTRY

Theme: Maintaining the Legacy: Reviving the Passion

Pastor: the Rev. Valentine Wallace

EVENTS

• Memorabilia Sale (ongoing)
• Launch of Website (February 1, 2009)
• Launching Service & Launch of Magazine (March 26, 2009)
• May Fair (May 30, 2009)
• Emancipation Service (August 2, 2009)
• Thanksgiving for Baptist Schools (September 20, 2009 @ 9:00 a.m.)
• Long Service Banquet (October 17, 2009 @ 4:00 p.m.)
• Memorial Service, Homecoming & Closing Ceremony (December 20, 2009 @ 9:00 a.m.)

Memorabilia such as shirts, cups, key rings, pens, pencils will be on sale.

Place your orders with Dr. Phillip Mighty.

Website to be launched to mark this very important juncture in the church’s history.

At the service to launch the celebration of this great milestone, a commemorative magazine will also be launched. The magazine will seek to capture and preserve the historical growth of the church as it repositions itself for the future. Cost: $500. The Service and Magazine will be available on CD. Cost: $1000

May Fair – on the church grounds - Come out and share with us.

Emancipation Service: Jericho Baptist Church witnessed and participated in the Emancipation of Slavery. Slaves buried their shackles on the church grounds. There will be a special service to mark the event.

Thanksgiving Service for Baptist Schools to acknowledge the Baptist's long tradition of contribution to education and to salute our Baptist Schools.

Long Service Awards Banquet to acknowledge the work and worth of members who have served faithfully with distinction for 25 years and over. An evening of elegance and excellence.

Memorial Service, Homecoming & Closing Ceremony:

Memorializing members who passed on over the years, with relatives of the deceased at home and from abroad, and members residing overseas.

Other Opportunities for Contribution

• Face Lift of the Church – Re-tiling inside and front entrance with ceramic tiles; New drapery; Painting; Replacing board windows with French windows
• Outreach Ministry: Augmenting Bus Fund; Augmenting Church Hall fund; Sponsoring feeding programme for the elderly
• General Property Improvement: Sponsoring the Jericho Quilt; Improving perimeter wall; Fencing church & manse property; Installing gate to church property

CONTACT INFORMATION

Church Office: 876-903-2574 (Monday-Thursday 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.)
Pastor: 876-985-9285, E-mail: valentine_wallace@yahoo.com
Committee: B. Johnson, 876-394-8325, E-mail: bejon2003@yahoo.com
J. Martin, 876-885-8860, E-mail: juniorgmartin@yahoo.com
Acknowledging with deeply felt gratitude for God's surpassing goodness; power and love, Boulevard Baptist Church (BBC) celebrates 40 years of witness and ministry, claiming the verse, "Thus far has the Lord helped us", (1 Sam. 7:12) and the celebration theme, "Advancing the Mission Through Ministries and Auxiliaries".

At 40 years, BBC is blessed to have the foundation pastor as well as some of the foundation members still attending. The vision of the founding pastor, the Rev. Luther Gibbs, when he built a large church on Washington Boulevard in spite of public criticism, was of a large community of Christians worshiping at that location. As our present pastor, the Rev. Dr. Devon Dick, stated, "...the building is a testament to Pastor Luther Gibbs’ foresight with the building now being seemingly too small for the Jamaica Baptist Union Assembly opening nights..."

Our anniversary celebrations were officially launched on Sunday June 29, 2008 at a service at which the guest preacher was the Rev. Dr. Burchell Taylor, president of the Caribbean Baptist Fellowship and pastor of Bethel Baptist Church. He reminded the church, "We have a testimony from God, handle it with care." The introduction of a mentorship ministry, Youth Empowerment and Support, was another event which initiated our celebrations. This ministry helps young people "between age 10 and 19 years within and outside the church to develop an ongoing relationship with a caring adult for a period of one year".

On February 7, the day before our birthday, as an expression of our joy on our anniversary, we marched from the church to Molynes Road and back to the church to sensitize the public about God, handle it with care." The introduction of a mentorship ministry, Youth Empowerment and Support, was another event which initiated our celebrations. This ministry helps young people "between age 10 and 19 years within and outside the church to develop an ongoing relationship with a caring adult for a period of one year".

On February 7, the day before our birthday, by Hyacinth Brown

A large group of youth participating in a march on February 7, 2009 to celebrated the 40th anniversary of Boulevard Baptist Church.

Photo: Varick Downie

Deacon Emeritus Leleka Champagnie, foundation member received a Certificate of Recognition from Mrs. Sykes, wife of the guest speaker Justice Bryan Sykes, at the service at which foundation members were honoured. Photo: Varick Downie

the cutting of a birthday cake.

Our birthday was also marked with an anniversary supplement in the Gleaner’s Outlook magazine. The publication included messages of congratulations and good wishes from leaders of State and Church. It also highlighted some of the ministries of the church.

In March, we launched poster and essay competitions, opened to Sunday School students between 7 and 18 years. The theme is "Every Sunday School Can Grow". The Essay Competition has four categories, each targeting a different age group. The topic for the youngest, 9 to 12 years, is "What does Boulevard Baptist Church mean to you?" For the oldest, 30 and over, it is "Fellowship: Is it possible to achieve this with such a large congregation?"

With evangelism at the heart of our church, every fourth Sunday is dedicated to evangelism. In April, the Rev. Karl Johnson, JBU General Secretary, will be the preacher on that Sunday. During the last weekend of April, in partnership with Fusion International, we will have community festivals in Marverly, as a continuing local mission in that area.

A health fair and a jumble sale will take place on May 16 on the church grounds. June is "Home Coming Month". From June 7 to 13, members, families and friends, including those from overseas, will fellowship in activities, highlighted by a fun day at Font Hill Beach, St. Elizabeth.

Other celebratory events include a Bruckins Extravaganza on August 7; the Bogle Walkathon - August 8; the Eric Downie Lecture, The Role of the Baptist in Education by Professor Errol Miller – September 13; Harvest Celebration on October 4; Banquet - November 27; Women’s Federation Tea Party - December 5; Sunday School Anniversary Service – December 6; Thanksgiving Service – December 13. The celebrations will end on First Sunday February 2010 with a thanksgiving service and a festival of choirs extravaganza.

Our pastor, the Rev. Dr. Devon Dick, has challenged us to recommit ourselves to God during this 40th anniversary year, and to commit to use our spiritual gifts, experiences, expertise and resources in God's service. We pray that through God's enabling, our celebration will honour Him, strengthen our witness and service at BBC and bring others into fellowship with Him.

T he promise, "With long life will satisfy him and show him my salvation" has been fulfilled in the life of Adlin Pinnock who celebrated her 100th birthday on March 12, 2009. Affectionately called “Miss Mama” or “Sister Pinnock”, Adlin was born in Walker’s Wood, in the parish of St. Ann on March 12, 1909. She gained her formal education at Walker’s Wood Elementary School.

She and her husband, John Pinnock who predeceased her by 25, had seven children, three of whom pre-deceased her.

Miss Mama recalls that she moved from Walker’s Wood on or about 1950 and having no gainful employment at the time, decided to start a basic or private school. She started with eight children under a thatched hut in her yard at Harrison Town, not far from Great Pond where the school, now accommodating 150 students, is located. Over time, the school grew and because the demand for more space increased, it was re-located to Great Pond.

For over 20 years, she was the sole teacher at the school, earning very little herself, as the income generated from the parents’ contribution of One Shilling (approximately 10 cents) per week was barely enough to keep the school going. Today, there are three teachers and 150 students.

Adlin was a very devoted and caring teacher, often using her own resources to provide lunches and educational material for needy students. She retired in her 90th year. Miss Mama was instrumental in moulding the lives of over three generations.

On Thursday March 12, 2009; the school, which she founded; her family members and the Great Pond community honoured her for her invaluable.

A devoted Christian, a staunch Baptist and a member of the Women’s Federation, she came to the Ocho Rios Baptist Church from the Walkers Wood church, which she said she helped to build. On Thursday March 26, 2009 she will be honoured by the Ocho Rios Baptist Church Youth Fellowship and the Women’s Federation, in celebration of her 100th birthday as well her over fifty years of faithful witness.

To God be the glory for a life well lived and still being lived.
Members of the platform party and some of the over 100 mass choir at the Opening service in Ocho Rios.

Hannah Ferdinand of St. Vincent & the Grenadines signs agreement with JBU.

At Podium: Rev. Dr. Roy Notice, Bible Study Presenter, seated left to right - Rev. Karen Kirlew, Spiritual Director & Rev. Dr. Stephen Jennings. JBU President.

"JBU President, Stephen Jennings (left) & JBU General Secretary, Karl Johnson (right) welcomes JBU President Elect, Cawley Bolt."

Congregation at the Opening Service at the Ocho Rios Baptist Church.

Members of the platform party and some of the over 100 mass choir at the Opening Service in Ocho Rios.

**WOMENS FEDERATION ROAD MARCH**
JBU 159th General Assembly & Believers Convention

Ministers

Attendees and Delegates

Dr. David Goatley, Executive Director Lott Carey & Presenter, Ministers Conference (left) & Rev. Stephen Jennings, JBU President (right)

JBU President, Stephen Jennings (center) & JBU Youth Chairman, Lance Fisher (second row, left) stands with Youth Delegates at the Assembly.

Dr. David Goatley (left), Executive Director Lott Carey Baptist Foreign Mission, greets Honorable Redcliffe O. Walters (right), Custos Rotulorum of St. Ann, on a Courtesy Call during the Baptist Blitz

Dr. David Morey (left), special guest from Britain, greets His Worship the Mayor Councillor Ivan Anderson (right), Mayor of St. Ann, on a Courtesy Call during the Baptist Blitz.
BAPTISTS INSPIRED, RENEWED, TRANSFORMED

The Jamaica Baptist Union (JBU) Believers Convention & 159th General Assembly, held February 18-22, 2009, under the theme, "Living in the Spirit," fulfilled its promise of a life-changing experience. Scores of Baptists gathered in the parishes of St. Ann (Ocho Rios) and Kingston to worship and fellowship, and agreed to the future work of the Union. Among the dignitaries attending were the Rev. Dr. David Coffey, President of the Baptist World Alliance and the Rev. Dr. David Goatley, Executive Secretary-Treasurer of the Lott Carey Mission Convention.

The week of activities began on Wednesday February 18, 2009 with a Ministers Conference under the theme, "New Wine", and the topic, "God is Not Through With Me Yet". The Rev. Dr. David Goatley was the speaker; and the moderator was the President of the JBU, Rev. Dr. Stephen Jennings.

The conference lecture, "The Church as an Agent of Community Transformation", was held later that day at Sunset Jamaica Grande. The leader was the newly announced Baptist Warden, the Rev. Glennay Lalor, and the speaker was the Rev. Dr. Henley Morgan. That evening, JBU General Secretary, the Rev. Karl B. Johnson led the Opening Service at Ocho Rios Baptist Church. The Rev. Dr. Stephen Jennings, JBU President and pastor of Mona Circuit of Baptist Churches, delivered his sermon under the theme, "New Wine - New Wineskins".

The Bible studies and workshops, held at Sunset Jamaica Grande, commenced on Thursday and ended on Saturday. They were thought provoking. The topics were "Salt of the Earth", "Leaven for the Dough" and "New Wine - New Wineskins". The moderator for the sessions was the Rev. Karen Kirlaw of St. Ann's Bay Circuit of Baptist Churches. The presenter was Rev. Dr. Roy Notice of the New Testament Church of God. He focused the studies on Psalms 11, 12 and 13.

The workshops topics presented and discussed in family groups included "Lessons from the Past" - presented by Rev. Dr. Devon Dick, "Christianity: Private Preference or Public Truth?" - presented by Rev. Colin Cowan and "Today's Church Tomorrow" - presented by Dr. Errol Miller. On Thursday afternoon, the much-anticipated "Baptist Blitz" was an opportunity for outreach activities within the community, carried out by the Convention's family groups. Also, striking in their white uniforms, members of the Jamaica Baptist Women's Federation made a statement with their march through the town of Ocho Rios.

The plenary sessions took place on Friday when the General Secretary's report and the Treasurer's report were presented. The Rev. Cawley Bolt was voted as President-Elect.

Turtle River Park in Ocho Rios was the venue for the open-air meeting. Hundreds of Baptists gathered to hear from God through the spoken word and music ministry. The message of the Rev. Davewin Thomas and the musical offerings of gospel reggae artiste, DJ Nicholas; the group, Divine Ecstasy, and groups from Salt Spring and Calvary Baptist Churches blessed the worshippers. The Rev. Franklin Small, pastor of Hanover Circuit of Baptist Churches led the open-air meeting.

A service to memorialize leaders who passed on during the past year was held on Saturday morning. A brief plenary session followed. Retired minister, the Rev. Dr. Vivian Panton, with his wife, Norma, was honoured with a citation. Of significance also was the signing of an agreement between St. Vincent & The Grenadines Baptist Convention and the JBU. The final workshops, Bible Study and family group sessions were conducted, marking the end of the Ocho Rios leg of the JBU Believers Convention & 159th General Assembly.

All roads led to the National Arena in Kingston for the closing service. As is customary, the National Arena was filled to capacity. Bro. Myrie Gillings of Richmondvale Circuit led the morning service. The Rev. Dr. Stephen Jennings preached on the topic, "Fill My Cup, Lord". Sis. Stacy Lalor, final year student at United Theological College of the West Indies (UTCWI), led the afternoon service of commitment, at which the president of the Baptist World Alliance, the Rev. Dr. David Coffey, preached on

JBU IGNITES TURTLE RIVER PARK

Turtle River Park in Ocho Rios, St. Ann, was transformed on Friday night, February 20, 2009 by the Jamaica Baptist Union first ever open-air meeting. Baptists from all over the island came to Ocho Rios share in the JBU Convention & 159th General Assembly. The open-air meeting, an event under the stars, was an electrifying experience with preacher, the Rev. Davewin Thomas, pastor of Burchell Circuit of Baptist Churches; and musical groups including the acclaimed gospel reggae artiste, DJ Nicholas, ignited the Park with their ministry.

The Rev. Davewin Thomas passionately encouraged listeners to set themselves straight for God, reminding them to live exemplary lives. DJ Nicholas' magnetic performance attracted many young people. They sang along with him as they waved in enjoyment. Even older persons clapped and rocked to the rhythm as DJ Nicholas ministered.

DJ Nicholas testified to the receptive crowd and extended an invitation to the unsaved to receive salvation through Jesus Christ. In addition to those who had earlier responded to the call by the Rev. Davewin Thomas, scores more responded to Nicholas' invitation. After the Rev. Mr. Thomas prayed for them, the MC, Rev. Franklin Small, extended the invitation further and more persons went forward. After, he prayed for them, Christians were ready in a tent to counsel them. When DJ Nicholas left the stage, a rousing call for more went up from the crowd. He pleaded them by delivering one more song and then he exited amidst pleas for more.

Nathaniel White, of Ocho Rios Baptist Church, touched hearts with his renditions such as "Teach me, Lord, how to wait". The group, "Divine Ecstasy", delivered soul-stirring praise with their singing. Likewise, the groups from Salt Spring and Calvary Baptist Church conveyed solid messages in song.

It was a beautiful sight and a wonderful feeling to see the number of persons, old and young, who came out to fellowship. Indeed, the Convention was rewarding, and its success encourages continuation.

by Teisha-Ann Pinnock

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**Bible Wordsearch**

Fit the words in the list into the diagram below reading forward, backward, up, down, diagonally, always in a straight line.

Luke 15:21-31

```
E L E D E K S A T S R F L A C
T V R M U S I C P E O O H G T
D F E E T R E L D W U I L A
E A G R C D E L L A C N N A Q
I T N K Y A O F I L E D S D G
L H I C D T E S U D Q Y E D
P E F E I A H F L S U B A C
E R D R S N S I A A E S W B E
P R O T O O G T N T D D L H G
E O B P B B N D N G T N A O N
V U R C E L E B R A T E A U
E G I D Y R G N A T V I N S C
N A N R E H T O R B S R A E Y
T V G D D R O Y S S A F E H D
B E S T A M S G N I V A L S E
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**Predigal Son #2**

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Puzzle #165

ALWAYS  GAVE
ANGRY  GLAD
ASKED  GOAT
BACK  HOUSE
BEST  KILLED
BRING  MUSIC
BROTHER  NEVER
CALF  OLDER
CALLED  ORDERS
CELEBRATE  PLEADED
DANCING  PROPERTY
DEAD  REFUSED
DISOBED  REPLIED
EVEN  RING
EVERYTHING  ROBE
FATHER  SAFE
FATTENED  SANDALS
FEAST  SERVANTS
FEET  SLAVING
FIELD  SON
FINGER  SOUND
FOUND  SOUNDED
FRIENDS  SQUANDERED
YOUNG  YEARS
```

After you find all the hidden words the left over letters spell out a Bible verse reading from the top left to the bottom right.

**Psalm 31**

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E "L E D E K S A T S R F L A C
T V R M U S I C P E O O H G T
D F E E T R E L D W U I L A
E A G R C D E L L A C N N A Q
I T N K Y A O F I L E D S D G
L H I C D T E S U D Q Y E D
P E F E I A H F L S U B A C
E R D R S N S I A A E S W B E
P R O T O O G T N T D D L H G
E O B P B B N D N G T N A O N
V U R C E L E B R A T E A U
E G I D Y R G N A T V I N S C
N A N R E H T O R B S R A E Y
T V G D D R O Y S S A F E H D
B E S T A M S G N I V A L S E
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**MORE PUZZLES AT:**

http://biblewordgames.com

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Cont’d on page 13
Young, Gifted and “Back”

by YeKengale

I call on you, young men, because you are strong. Strength, zeal, vigour—characteristics of youth, the most creative, the most productive, the most vital period of the human life cycle. Every society/community/organization of longevity that would prosper must have the energy of this critical group fully harnessed and engaged. This warrior class must lead the charge of the aims and purposes of the group. They must be fully initiated in and identify with the values and mission of the community. This is not the phase of life to be ‘back’ in anything. This is the most ‘forward’ group of each collective. They lead the charge.

When I was introduced to the theme, I sought clarification for the concept, “back”. Back? Back in church? So there’s a tendency to stray. If so, why? —In the back of the church, in the sense of not being fully engaged, not on the front lines? —This critical group? —This a dying church, an anemic church? If so, why?

Rather than trying to process anything negatively, as the song says: “Forward ever, backward never”. The Baptist movement, particularly the JBU, fully engages the energies of its young adults in its mission as it seeks to continue its Christian witness in Jamaica.

Young Gifted and Forward

- The Young Adults – Passion
- The “Romping Shop Generation”
- The Catalyst Crew Cry
- The Church as Light - Vision
- The Church as Salt - Mission
- The Testimony of the Spirit and of the Word
- The Revelation of the Father
- The Forward Charge: Talented, Trained, Tempered, Tolerant, Turned loose.

...turn and appeal of this church. We see similar explosions of church attendance in places like Australia (Hill Song) and in big cities of the States. No necessary antipathy exists between deep spirituality and the cultural context in which this spirituality is expressed.

In Jamaica, we have two categories of young people who are passionately engaged. There is the Romping Shop generation, most of whom do not positively identify with Christian values. Then, there is the cry of the Catalyst Crew of Christian young people who embrace Christ and Christianity but have been turned off by the church's traditional expression.

Both are hungry for the grounding experience of church to anchor their lives to lasting and meaningful values. Are the doors of the church open to either group? If they walk through the doors, do they feel a welcomed? — Or do they sense a necessity to conform to standards and expressions, which are alien to their psyche?

Recently, on the way to church, I gave a lift to a mother. She had three children and she made sure that went to church. Recently, on the way to church, I gave a lift to a mother. She had three children and she made sure that went to church. She had left him because he was reluctant to get ready for church. I asked her if he liked going to church. She said no.

Cont’d on page 14
TRIBUTE DELIVERED AT FUNERAL SERVICE OF THE REV. WINSTON SYLVESTER CLEMETSON
AT THE BOULEVARD BAPTIST CHURCH, ST. ANDREW
ON SATURDAY, MARCH 28, 2009 AT 9:00 A.M.

The year was 1962, the place Grace Baptist Church, Oracabessa, St. Mary (his home church) when, in response to God’s call upon his life to full-time Christian ministry. Winston Sylvester Clemetson took his vows of ordination. Like countless others, Winston Sylvester Clemetson, this 28 year-old young man, was to discover that, in many ways, his life would be altered, that it was no longer his own and that Calabar College was really a workshop providing tools for the work of Ministry. There are those who argue that the generations of men trained at Calabar were influenced in large measure by a view of Christian Ministry that might be alien to many in our day. While allowing for the exceptions, persons who offered themselves for full-time Christian ministry in those days often proscribed the work in ways that seemed to convey a wholeheartedness which eschewed a glimmer of self-centredness. They seemed acutely conscious that as Ministers, there were some peculiar expectations, challenges and issues of conduct that required them to order their lives in ways that would not cause unnecessary negative attention to the gospel. Their role among the people was as servant and they would do whatever it took to serve the congregations under their charge. For them, a word such as sacrifice was one that was lived out in the way they set about the work of Ministry.

Today, the Jamaica Baptist Union joins in thanking God for loaning to us His servant, Winston, and for the lessons that God used Him to teach us. We remember with gratitude to God his period of service among us: as a missionary in the Turks and Caicos Islands; his pastoral ministry in the Belle Castle, Balacalava and Hanover Street Circuits; as a member of the JBU Executive Committee; as Moderator for the Associations of every parish in which he pastored; his work on our Board of Mission & Evangelism; his ministry to the regional work through the Caribbean Baptist Fellowship. His pastoral ministry was characterized by creativity; boldness and determination, executed with the welfare of the people of its core. He was involved in the lives of the people and in the communities he served. Indeed, his was a ministry to the whole person and he brought his whole self to it. Brother Winston was a passionate man with strong convictions.

The Rev. Mr. Clemetson (Clemmy, Vinny gave himself fully to the areas of service into which God called him. None was more evident than his exploits in the Union’s ministry of evangelism and discipleship programme. His involvement in those areas was matched with a kind of dogged resolve, which eventually became part of his profile. To speak about his contribution to the Union’s engagement in our Lord’s directive to make disciples is to recall his sojourn as a missionary to the Turks and Caicos Islands through the then Jamaica Baptist Missionary Society. There he had direct responsibility for five churches and shared responsibility for three others. His wife, Sadie, joined him not only as his wife but as a missionary in her own right; and as Brother Winston would have quickly added, she is the only female JBU missionary to date.

Winston was engaged in plethora of conferences and seminars on Evangelism—internationally, regionally and nationally. One well known congregation of another denomination credits their understanding of mission and evangelism to seed sown by the Rev. Mr. Clemetson when he conducted a seminar on at that church several years ago. But we could not end without speaking for those persons who for years formed part of the body of delegates at our General Assemblies and for those who were members of the congregation at the Arena on the Sundays. For many of them they know our brother as the man with the camera, the man who in later years became our Castro look alike. Once, again, death forces us to reflect on life and the many lessons that God would have us embrace and reaffirm from the life and death of the Rev. Winston Sylvester Clemetson. As a community of faith, we acknowledge the abiding presence of Almighty God and, as we remember Vinny, with gratitude to God for loaning him to the Union and to so many others, we say to his wife, Sadie, and other family members that the Lord, our God will be with you and the God of Jacob will be your refuge as you struggle to adjust to life without him.

Karl Johnson (Rev.)
General Secretary, JBU

MISSON ACTIVITIES: AREAS FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION AND CONTRIBUTION:

- Jamaica Baptist Historical Society (JBHS)
  - field trips to historical sites
  - Annual George Liele Lecture - Sunday, October 11, 2009
  - Become a member of the JBHS, call the Mission Agency;

- Jamaica Baptist Union Mission Agency;
- Mission Volunteers to assist with the Kingston Gardens and 100 & Park Lanes, Red Hills Road Missions; Mission Volunteer training workshops, coming in May 2009.
- Health Care Assistant Course- Classes started February 2009.
- JBU Resource Centre is opened on Tuesdays & Fridays, 9 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Call the JBU offices for an appointment.
- The Mission Times - a quarterly newsletter produced by the JBU Mission Agency. Subscribe for your copy today; only JMD$50.00 per issue.

Let us live in the Spirit and make the Mission Possible. To God be the Glory!

JUST KIDDING

How Do I Get into Heaven?
A teacher asked the children in her Sunday School class,

"If I sold my house and my car, had a big garage sale and gave all my money to the church, would I get into heaven?"
"NO!" the children all answered.

"If I cleaned the church every day, mowed the yard, and kept everything neat and tidy, would I get into heaven?"
Again, the answer was "NO!"

"Well," she continued, "then how can I get to heaven?"
In the back of the room, a five-year-old boy shouted out, "You gotta be dead!"

For further information contact Jamaica Baptist Union Mission Agency (JBU/MA), 2B Washington Boulevard, Kingston 20, Jamaica, W.I. Telephone- Office: 876-969-9835/969-6268; Cell: 876-322-5387/969-7381; Fax: 876 924-6296; Email: info@jbu.org.jm;

JBU Mission Fund
Contributions may be deposited in National Commercial Bank (NCB) Account No. 304309997.

Matured Mission Fund (Mexico, USA, Italy, Brazil and Jamaica), Virginia, USA, July-August 2009; - Disaster Awareness and Emergency Response (DAER) - We are assembling a local disaster relief team.

- Mission Volunteers to assist with the Kingston Gardens and 100 & Park Lanes, Red Hills Road Missions; Mission Volunteer training workshops, coming in May 2009.
- Health Care Assistant Course- Classes started February 2009.
- JBU Resource Centre is opened on Tuesdays & Fridays, 9 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Call the JBU offices for an appointment.
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Let us live in the Spirit and make the Mission Possible. To God be the Glory!

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In the back of the room, a five-year-old boy shouted out, "You gotta be dead!"
CHRISTIAN HUMILITY AND
THE CROSS OF JESUS CHRIST

Philippians 2:1-8
By Rev. Cawley Bolt

Humility is a necessary virtue of the Christian life. It ought to be a characteristic trait of all the disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ. But Christian humility is not a natural endowment, not a characteristic with which we are born. Christian humility is an act of the grace of God which is made possible through the empowerment and enabling of the Holy Spirit, through the Christian being ‘in Christ’. This becomes very clear when it is understood in the light of Jesus and His activity with respect to His crucifixion as the apostle, Paul, typifies it in Philippians 2:1-8. The apostle calls for unity in the life and experience of the congregation(s). Beginning at Chap 1:27-24, Paul insists that the members should be of the same mind—one mind. In 3:15, Paul strongly urges that those who are of the same mind should be mature as people of God.

In consistently repeating the importance of the Christians at Philippi possessing the same mind, he instructs that they should, in humility, regard others as better than themselves and that each should look not for his or her own interests first but initially to the interests of others (2:3-4). It does not come naturally that we put others before ourselves nor that we naturally seek the interests of others and so the implication from Paul is that humility and selflessness are possible for that is what putting and considering others first are about—being humble enough and selfless enough to regard others and their interests as priority. But for that to happen, radical transformation must take place in the thinking and life of the individual.

In order for humility, selflessness and selfless service to become the norm of Christian experience, Paul draws attention to the action of Jesus Christ; and in what some believe to be an early Christian hymn, and what others consider to be Paul’s construction, the apostle points the way to Christian humility and selflessness. He does that by insisting that Christian humility happens when the members of the community have the mindset of Jesus Christ (Phil 2:5). Paul is stating that each member of the community should have the mind of Jesus Christ so that they can be who they ought to be through living their lives in Jesus Christ. The point is not that they should follow the example of Jesus, for Jesus is not an example to follow but the standard by which we are measured and the enabler of what discipleship requires of us.

In order to be clear about what is meant by the Christians at Philippi having the mind of Jesus Christ, Paul points directly to the attitude and action of Jesus as these relate to His becoming human and, while on earth, His being humble and obedient without reservation and making the ultimate sacrifice of His execution by crucifixion, although he was innocent of any crime or wrongdoing.

Paul makes it clear that the divine privileges that our Lord had by reason of His pre-existence—His ‘being in the form of God’—means that He was of the very being and essence of God. He gave up those privileges; that is, He did not grasp or hold on to them. Instead, without hesitation, He became not just a human being but also a clear indication of the status that He undertook concerning His attitude and approach, that of a slave, to the fulfilment of His ministry. His obedience to God knew no bounds. He paid the ultimate sacrifice of death in obedience to God. A careful reading of the life of Jesus in the gospels makes it clear that humility was a characteristic element in His life.

Humility from a Christian perspective, then, must be defined by the attitude and practice of Jesus. Humility is a characteristic element of Christian spirituality that is rooted in the life of Jesus Christ. Humility is made available to Christ’s disciples by their being ‘in Christ’. It is integral to unconditional obedience to God in which selfless service and concern for others become the norm of Christian faith and life. In II Corinthians 5:17, Paul declares, ‘But we have the mind of Christ’ (cf. vv14-16). Christian humility is, then, a result of the radical transformation, which has taken place in the life of the disciple of Jesus for ‘if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation’ (II Cor. 5:17). It, therefore, is inevitable to say that ‘one has no Christian existence apart from being ‘in Christ’. The phrase ‘in Christ’ is understood to be a characteristic phrase of St. Paul.

For a one to be humble and selfless, one must have a strong sense of security in life; one must be able to let go of one’s concern for one’s self and instinctively embrace others. A verse of the hymn, ‘Lord, speak to me, that I may speak’, makes the point strongly:

> O strengthen me, that while I stand firm on the rock, secure but free, I may stretch out a loving hand to wrestlers with the troubled sea.

The rock on which the Christians stands, in order to feel secure, is Jesus Christ; His teaching and way of life (St Matt. 7:24-25). The Christian’s strength lies in being ‘in Christ’.

"Empowered for Engagement"

Undeniably, the addition of a believers’ convention and new initiatives such as a Baptist blitz and an open-air meeting were rewarding. They encouraged fellowship, evangelism and discipleship. The change in location was fruitful as other persons besides delegates participated in the Assembly. Early morning and late night activities fostered interaction and integration. Indeed, Baptists were inspired, renewed and transformed through the stimulating workshops, thought provoking Bible studies, Convention lecture and "family group" discussions. After such a glorious experience, we certainly are not the same.

by Teisha-Ann Pinnock

Citation

motivated his concern about the plight of persons in common law unions who desired to become a part of the church. He wrote a book titled "The Church and Common Law Unions". It created shock waves within the Christian community. Some referred to him as a heretic, others questioned his spirituality. Yet, he remained resolute. His conviction awakened the church community about a subject that, for years, had been covert.

Panton and the JBU

Dr. Panton has always had an undying sense of gratitude to the JBU for the privilege of serving as a Minister of Christ. He served on various committees, later becoming a JBU Vice President. He served as Acting Pastor/Moderator of the Eltham/Angels and Hanover Street Circuits. The JBU, upon request of the Ministry of National Security and Justice appointed Dr. Panton to serve as their first full-time chaplain and counsellor. Dr. Panton established the chaplaincy as a full unit of the Jamaica Constabulary Force. His work received international recognition as he won the world prestigious John A. Bryce Award from the International Conference of Police Chaplains while also serving as Vice President of the worldwide movement of Police Chaplains. His fellow chaplains hailed him for his professionalism and the Jamaica Constabulary Force eulogized him as creative, innovative and compassionate. We laud him as a beloved son, brother and friend, dedicated and consecrated to our Lord.

The Family Man

No citation honouring the work of our brother can be complete without making more than passing reference to Sis. Betty, (Norma), his wife and partner in Ministry for 40 years. Sis. Betty served alongside her husband and served God's call to the ministries of music, drama, teaching and counselling. She made the mission house a place of comfort not only for her own family but also for the community. She became known in all the churches for her melodious voice and for her consistent care and support of her husband and their three children, Jacqueline, Jerome and Jean-Ann.

We salute the Rev. Dr. Vivian Panton and Sis. Betty Panton, both gifts from God to our beloved Union. We thank "Sir P" and Sis. Betty for the many years of faithful and enthusiastic service. We thank God that this country-boy from St Mary answered the call and brought countless blessings to scores of God's people. May they, on that day, hear from heaven's throne: "Well done, good and faithful servants!"
My concern was for the one left. What will happen to him when he comes of age? Will he find a church expression that turns him to the Life of the Spirit? Or will he fall prey to the attractions of the hype culture of the streets.

A ‘dance hall’ church would engage his attention. But so many of the gospel artists and deejays seem reluctant to align their ‘ministries’ with a church experience or to create a relevant church expression that can ground their zealous efforts to represent the kingdom of God.

We complain of the decadence in the media, which has become sewerage of values in the name of commercial interests. Songs, TV and radio programming, films, movies, plays, poetry, the plastic arts all has succumbed to the gravity of degeneracy. The church answered with media of its own but, by and large, it still expresses its insularity in large measure through the new fora.

Where is the Jamaican version of ‘Unshackled’? — Something with which our own inner city community could identify? That talent which exists in the church to create music, TV sitcoms, movies and plays, expressive of Christian values but appealing to the dance hall generation is this talent being harnessed? Organized? Is there a vision for such? Young people with spiritual resources need to be creatively linked with young people of spiritual needs through media and creative artistic production that engage the passion and interest of youth.

There are many other fields of service. The society is in need of young, talented, trained, tolerant, tempered leadership. Can this leadership be identified within the church, and harnessed? When this happens, a generation of forward youth, passionate for Christ, ready to serve the nation in the areas of their God-given talent will be turned loose to move ahead outside of the box of convention, but within the grounding relationships and covenant of church, ready to take new territory for the kingdom of God.

The church that still is parochial in its mentality, denominational and competitive in its disposition will miss the opportunity to reap the harvest of a generation tired of church but hungry for Christ. The Spirit of Christ must be at the heart of ministry – regardless of cultural orientation. The Word – not doctrinal but redemptive must be the message. And the Father God of Love who is the Source, Sustainer and Saviour of the human spirit will be revealed.

I believe these issues to be at the heart of fully engaging the young adults who are more than a church asset but are called to be ambassadors of a very vibrant and compelling culture, the kingdom of God.
In 2009 the global Baptist family celebrates with great joy what God has done as we salute our 400th anniversary! The ministry that Baptists have offered across these four centuries is interwoven with the stories of individuals and communities of faith from every corner of the world. This year we retell our family stories to our congregations, to our children, and to our children’s children once again. We remember the best of Baptist life together and link the generations each to each in this marvellous heritage of faith.

Who were the first Baptists? And how did we become such a family? For our earliest Baptist brothers and sisters, the 17th century was a time of beginnings: first church, earliest declarations of faith, initial denominational structures, and the witness of suffering that forged the concept of religious liberty for all people.

**Baptist Beginnings, 1609**

As the 17th century dawned, England was an explosive country. Citizens were legally required to be members and adhere to the teachings of the state church. Refusing to do so resulted in fines, whippings, and imprisonments. Religious and political forces clashed violently with a new and growing conviction among many Christians that a truer expression of God’s church should be characterized by faith in Jesus Christ and separated from restrictions of a state church system. Many dozens of Christian brothers and sisters acted courageously in 1607 when, despite threats to life, home, and property, they fled their homeland and sailed to Amsterdam, Holland, a self-proclaimed City of Refuge. More than anything else, they desired the religious freedom to search the Scriptures and worship according to the pattern they found in its pages.

These believers were offered shelter and employment in the bake-house of Jan Munter, a Waterlander Mennonite, whose business lay close to the Amstel River near the present-day Rembrandtsplein section of the city. Here the English refugees, led by John Smyth and Thomas Helwys, worked, worshiped, and hashed out their theological convictions across cleared supper tables lit by guttering candlelight. In just two years’ time they had rejected infant baptism and founded a new church.

In its first believer’s baptismal service, Smyth first baptized himself and then the rest of the small congregation. Each person baptized was an adult who had confessed belief in Jesus Christ. Following the service, the tiny group formed a church whose voluntary membership was based upon a personal confession of faith in Jesus Christ and the baptism of professed believers only.

This radical decision in 1609 marked the moment when these religious dissenters became the first Baptists. But theirs was not an easy road and challenges confronted each step. As they wrestled with how best to relate to other communities of faith, Helwys returned home to England in 1611 with about 10 members and settled at Spitalfields, just outside the northwest city wall of London. There they planted the first Baptist church on English soil. Helwys quickly published the first defense for religious liberty in the English language, A Short Declaration of the Mystery of Iniquity (1612).

He proclaimed that the English King had no power to control the religious beliefs or practices of his subjects; instead, regardless of religious belief, each individual must have the freedom to respond to the Creator and to read and interpret Scripture. Persecution followed. Helwys was taken to Newgate prison, where he died. Yet within a generation, more than 54 Baptist churches thrived.

**Baptists Today**

Four hundred years later, our Baptist family story is still the result of God’s calling, gifts, and empowering. Baptists still uphold a New Testament Church model, preach the Good News of Jesus Christ, follow in believer’s baptism, and practice inter-church cooperation and brotherly union. Baptists at their best have continued to affirm and defend the freedoms for all people embraced by our earliest brothers and sisters. Overarchingly all has been God’s sustaining grace.

Shouler to shoulder around the globe, the Baptist family stands as grateful communities of faith, families, and individual believers. We bow our heads acknowledging our dependence on God, confess our need for reconciliation and healing, and pledge our renewed proclamation of Christ. We look into each other’s eyes declaring our encouragement for the work God is doing in His various ministries. We commit to one another our prayerful and financial support for the work among us. We solemnly seek the Father for continued direction, enabling, and empowerment as His work goes forth to accomplish His purposes. We seek courage in the living of these days.

Every day this year we remember . . . and as we remember, we praise the Promiser who keeps His Promises. In Him alone rests secure our Baptist hope and future. Let the generations rejoice!

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Junior Camp
Ages 9 – 12
6th – 11th JULY

Intermediate I Camp
Ages 13 & 14
13th – 18th JULY

Intermediate II Camp
Ages 15 & 16
27th July – 1st August

Youth Camp
Ages 17 – 20
03rd – 08th AUGUST