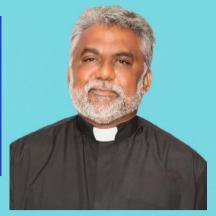
## **The Official Publication of The Presbyterian Church of Trinidad & Tobago February 2024**



#### 156 years of Witness and Service 🔪 👖 📁 "Pilgrimage of Justice, Reconciliation and Unity"

# Output Output

# THE MODERATOR SPEAKS



PCTT MODERATOR, THE RIGHT REVEREND DANIEL CHANCE

#### **To God be the Glory!**

With the beginning of the New Year, the Presbyterian Church of Trinidad and Tobago celebrated its 156th year of Christian witness and mission on the first Sunday of the year, January 7th 2024, through a service of thanksgiving held at the Susamachar Presbyterian Church. We continue to acknowledge the theme adopted for the worship experience, the World Council of Churche theme, "Pilgrimage of Justice, Reconciliation and Unity."

We continue to express gratitude to those who led and participated in the service, as well as the wider membership and all well-wishers who attended the service either physically or virtually. The extremely appropriately timed message proclaimed by The Reverend Daniel Teelucksingh challenged all members of the church to move away from their casual ways of living to fulfil the mission of the church, bringing new members into the fellowship of the church, as well as reaching out to those who have wandered away from the community of believers.

"Vows of Recommitment" were taken, as we all reaffirmed our faith in God and renewed our commitment to duty. This now, I share with you, so that as we embark on the journey into this year, 2024, we are all able to continually reaffirm our faith and recommit our lives as members of the body of Christ in the world to serve God and His people.

#### "Vows of Recommitment"

Leader: All forms of Ministry within the Church belong to Christ's Ministry, in union with Christ, and in partnership with each other. Christians are called to serve, according to their unique gifts. We have all entered into a covenant relationship with God and have dedicated ourselves to the service of God.

the services of Ordination, At Commissioning and Licensing, we made known our faith in God; sacred vows were taken which continue to guide our decisions and actions. No doubt, we have all encountered mountain top and vallev experiences.

However, there is always the need for commitment ongoing and the reaffirmation of the vows which we have taken. I. therefore, extend this invitation to you as we reaffirm our commitment to serve God and the people of God:

#### All Ministers, Deaconesses, Lay Pastors, Presiding Elders (both Retired and Active Service)

Leader: In the presence of God and the community of believers, having acknowledged our dependence on the Grace of God, do you again commit yourselves to the vows of faithfulness, diligence and obedience to your calling?

#### Response: I do, relying on the Grace of God.

Leader: Will you continue to uphold the teaching of Scripture in all its truth and purity; to minister with passion and integrity, to shepherd the flock which has been entrusted to you, and to care for all of God's people? Response: I do so promise, God being my helper.

#### **Our Serving and Honorary Elders.**

Leader: Having first been called by God and elected by those within your congregation, will you continue to serve through pastoral care and visitation, to encourage, support and counsel, while being examples of God's love and grace?

Response: We do so promise, God being our helper.

Leader: Will you serve with the zeal and passion given to you by God, to minister to the sick, inspire the faint hearted and, through your faith and knowledge of God's Word, bring those in need of hope and peace into fellowship with God?

Response: We do so promise, God being our helper.

#### All Lay persons.

Leader: As members of the body of Christ, are you willing to partner with your spiritual leaders, to create an environment of love, respect for the sanctity of human life, and to be defenders of the faith, thus drawing others to experience the goodness and love of God in their lives?

Response: We are willing, God being our helper.

#### All members in the congregation.

Having reaffirmed our commitment to serve God and His people, may this act strengthen our dedication, inspire our service, and renew our passion for the Ministry to which we have been called. As we recommit ourselves to these sacred vows, may God grant us wisdom, courage and perseverance, to fulfill our calling to the Glory of His Name and the advancement of His kingdom. Amen.

Again, I use this column to impress upon, and to challenge all those who come across this message to live out, on a daily basis, our faith-union relationship with our God.

## E DITORRIAL HELP US TO GROW IN GENEROUSITY.

#### "Whoever is kind to the poor lends to the LORD, and will be repaid in full" (Proverbs 19:17 NRSVUE).

The Christmas season is just behind us when we gave cheerfully because we think it is a time of giving and that is it for many among us until Christmas 2024 rolls around. For many, it is a time when we make a special effort to give to others. There are those among us who give as part of our Christmas tradition.

Those who would like to give do not have to give extravagantly only at Christmas, they can give in small amounts year-round. Donors often do not realize how much recipients value even small gifts. One way to find out about organizations which distribute to those in need, if you are not aware of how or what you can give, is to inquire from friends, co-workers, and neighbours.

Over the Christmas season, it was observed that donations were down in 2023. One Member of Parliament noted that she had to re-direct her hamper drive to her constituents who would normally receive food cards. This put limitations on giving which resulted in needy persons not being on the receiving end of good will.

Giving does not only include hampers and tangible things but also includes giving of our time: to read, to sit with, to visit, to chat, to run errands for or care for our neighbours. Giving of one's time is one aspect in which the groups of the church: the Local Board, the PCW, the AOTS, the Choir, the Youth Group and the Sunday School can become involved. There are PCW groups whose members add one grocery item costing under \$25.00 to their shopping cart and bring same to monthly meetings. These make up a hamper. They identify recipients from the community who are in need and distribute accordingly. We need to devise ways to sustain our charitable efforts year-round. Let us not allow Carnival or Easter or crime to shift our focus from assisting those in our neighbourhood or in the wider society who need our care and attention.

Brothers and sisters, we are all children of one God, we have a duty to reach out to the least among us and to those who need our love, care, and assistance. The Christmas season is just behind us when we gave cheerfully because we think it is a time of giving. We must devise ways to maintain our efforts throughout the year as there are always people who need our kindness. Each of us can make a difference if we try. Let our faith lead us to quench the thirst of others.



#### 156TH ANNIVERSARY MESSAGE DELIVERED BY REVEREND TEELUCKSINGH

Communications Unit with assistance of YouTube Transcript and ChatGPT

In a powerful sermon commemorating the 156th anniversary of the Presbyterian Church in Trinidad and Tobago, Reverend Daniel Teelucksingh addressed both the rich history and the pressing challenges facing the church and society. The sermon began with a heartfelt blessing for those present and online, expressing gratitude for the dedication of past preachers and the Holy Spirit's guidance.

Acknowledging the church's historical achievements, the speaker called for a renewal of purpose, emphasizing the need to break away from past successes and move forward with a clear vision. The sermon reflected on the criticisms faced by the church but highlighted its resilience over the years.

The challenges confronting the church, including declining attendance and a lukewarm spirit, were candidly addressed. A call for recommitment and a renewal of faith was emphasized, framing the church's mission as an ongoing responsibility beyond celebrating past achievements.

The sermon transitioned into a sober analysis of societal issues, such as rising crime rates, violence, and a perceived wave of godlessness. The church was urged to actively engage with the community, offering counseling services to address various societal problems. There was a call for unity, emphasizing the importance of every member's participation, regardless of their level of commitment.

Despite the grim realities painted, the sermon ended on a note of hope. The speaker reminded the congregation that the church's survival and success are not contingent on human strength but on the Spirit of the Lord.



Celebrates with Thanksgiving and Joy 156 years of Witness and Service

Theme: "Pilgrimage of Justice, Reconciliation and Unity"

Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> January, 2024 at 4:00 p.m. The Susamachar Presbyterian Church, Coffee Street, San Fernando..

Leader of Worship: The Rev Letra Jacob, Guest Preacher: The Rev. Daniel Teelucksingh, Choir: PCTT 156<sup>th</sup> Anniversary National Choir Organists: Ms. Zara Lackhan and Mr. Kevin Ragbir Steel Orchestra:

Susamachar Presbyterian Church Steel Orchestr

The final message emphasized the church's role as a beacon of light and salt in the world, encouraging active participation from all members to contribute to societal well-being and spiritual renewal.

In conclusion, the sermon served as a poignant call to action, urging the Presbyterian Church to not only reflect on its past but to actively engage with the challenges of the present by fostering renewal and addressing societal issues.

#### NEW HYMN FOR THE 156TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

WORDS: REV. DANIEL TEELUCKSINGH MUSIC: 'PRAISE MY SOUL, THE KING OF HEAVEN'.

God be praised our heavenly Father
 For your blessings through the years,
 On the Church your love created
 History's timeline holds this gem.
 Hallelujah, Hallelujah
 Cherished glorious legacy

 From the estate schools and pulpits, Barriers bow to gospel spread Like an ever-flowing river
 Church's hand reached near and far. Hallelujah, Hallelujah Hope dispensing, full and free  Guide our mission, yet unfinished Bringing light where darkness rules
 Servant Church, God's hand still moving Make us worthy stewards of grace. Hallelujah, Hallelujah
 Crown the efforts of your Church.

 Faithful Shepherd, mighty Saviour Walk with us in years to come Consecrate, anoint your people Bring revival, faith renew. Hallelujah, Hallelujah
 Lead us all to love you more. Amen.

#### **156TH ANNIVERSARY PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

**Reverend Stephen Harripersad** 

Gracious Lord, on this momentous day of our church's anniversary, as we focus on the theme, "Pilgrimage of Justice, Reconciliation, and Unity." We bow before you with contrite hearts seeking Your forgiveness for our shortcomings in fully embodying and translating these principles in practical everyday life and living.

Grant us the strength to recognize our shortcomings and the humility to seek Your mercy.

Forgive us Lord for the times when we, failed as the 'Body Of Christ' to recognize the strength that lies in unity.

Forgive us when our focus shifted from the higher purpose of glorifying you to self-interest and personal gains.

Forgive us for those times when we prioritized worldly name and fame over the greater mission which you have set before us. Forgive us, Lord, if we have been silent in the face of injustice, neglecting our duty as watchmen in society.

Forgive us for any complacency that hindered us from being proactive in addressing societal issues. Grant us discernment to identify areas where we can make a meaningful impact, serving as instruments of your truth and righteousness.

Forgive us Lord if we have failed to be advocates for the marginalized, if we have turned a blind eye to the cries of the weak, defenseless, and poor. If we have wavered in our struggle to dismantle systems that perpetuate divisions and inequality in our nation forgive us and grant us the courage to break the chains of silence and to be bold advocates for the defenseless and oppressed within our society.

Forgive us Lord, if we have not consistently used our prophetic voice to challenge leaders to serve with honesty, integrity, and compassion.

We seek your forgiveness for the moments when we forgot to be a voice for the voiceless. Instill in us a commitment to amplify the voices of those who are unheard, and empower us to be advocates for those whose struggles often go unnoticed. Help us to be vigilant advocates for justice, ensuring that our community reflects the principles of righteousness and fairness, equity and unity.



May this anniversary be a catalyst for change. May our collective voices be a beacon of hope, advocating for policies that reflect Your divine principles of love, fairness and compassion. May this service be a time of collective repentance and renewal, which can be a source of hope and healing in our society, longing for genuine unity, love, togetherness and peace. Lord, grant us the strength and courage to be bold advocates for justice, forgiveness, and unity.

Fill us with the passion to be the movers and shakers in these times, where people are crying out for hope and healing.

May Your Holy Spirit empower us to step out of our comfort zones, to speak out against injustice, to forgive as You have forgiven us, and to work tirelessly towards unity among all people. Let our actions and words reflect Your love and grace in Christ Jesus.



THE TRINIDAD PRESBYTERIAN

#### A LIFETIME OF JOY IN THE PCTT

Submitted by General Secretary of Synod Mr. Terrence Warde

Reverend Joy Abdul-Mohan retired from active service in the Presbyterian Church of Trinidad and Tobago (PCTT) on 31st December 2023. Rev. Abdul-Mohan took an early retirement having served the church for 35 years as an Ordained Minister; four of those years as the Moderator of the PCTT.

Rev. Joy is one of three children of James and Eva Abdul and attended the St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Princes Town. She has served six (6) Pastoral Regions during her tenure as an Ordained Minister at the PCTT.

Rev. Joy was baptized by the Rev. Dr. J.C. Mc Donald and has become synonymous with the pioneering spirit of the Bible Women of our Church's history with many first-time appointments -

•The first local woman to graduate from the Ministerial program from the St. Andrew's Theological College with a Licentiate in Theology in 1987;

•The first locally-trained woman to be Ordained in the PCTT in 1989;

•The first woman to serve as the Principal of the St. Andrew's Theological College in 2002;

•The first female Clergy to serve as an Independent Senator in the 10th Republic Parliament of Trinidad and Tobago in 2014.

From a student of the Princes Town Presbyterian #2 Primary, the Princes Town Comprehensive and Barrackpore Senior Secondary Schools, Rev. Joy also attended the St. Andrew's Theological College and the Ivy-League Princeton University Theological Seminary in New Jersey, USA reading for a Master of Arts (Christian Education major; curriculum development), graduating in 1993.

She has pursued higher education in Law at the University of London; in Mediation through the Dispute Resolution Foundation accredited by the Mediation Board of Trinidad and Tobago and pursuing a BA in Childhood Education/Family Law.

She is an author of 12 publications and has pursued further professional training at the Bossey Institute, Geneva, Switzerland, the University of the West Indies and the Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago.

Family support and, especially the steadfast and commitment of her husband, Darryl Joseph Mohan-Seenath, has been a major factor in Rev. Joy's



journey of faith and servant-leadership. Her role in shaping the Pastoral Regions of Chaguanas/Freeport, La Romaine/Debe, Susamachar, Barrackpore, Oropouche and Point Fortin/Cedros over her lifetime of service has been rewarding for those regions and the PCTT in general.

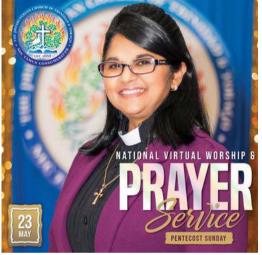
Rev. Joy's tenure as Moderator was punctuated with the global pandemic and that period of service will always define her as an astute leader who navigated the PCTT through the waters of adversity and uncertainty. She had the fortitude to do so through consensus, with integrity, humility, and commitment. The Migrant support thrust, the Beth-Rapha Counselling Centre, the digitization of the Trinidad Presbyterian Newsletter and the concept of "Church Without Walls" with live-streaming of services during lockdown of churches, and Health webinars were synonymous with that period of her service.

Her focus on community service and mission and outreach have guided Rev. Joy through a fulfilling career of Christ-like service locally and internationally. Children and women have always been the focus of her activism and social work.

In 2022, Rev. Joy's lifetime of social work was recognized with a National Award for the Development of Women – Gold, in this country's Republic Day awards at the President's House.

Her response to this award was "I don't deserve this award but I accept it with the deepest humility not as a symbol of any personal achievement, but as a tribute to all women who labor sacrificially and magnanimously in the Church and Community."

Local organizations which would've benefitted from the community service of Rev. Joy would be the Naparima Scouts



Association, the South Aids Support, the Halfway House for Abused Women, the Hope Centre for Abandoned Children, the J.C. McDonald Home for the Aged, the Prison Service of Trinidad and Tobago, the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Medical Sciences (UWI), the Inter-Religious Organization, the RiverFlows Foundation, the Call To Action for Social Change Foundation, the Rapid-Fire Kidz Foundation and quite recently the Women Parliamentarians of Trinidad and Tobago (WPTT).

The role of Chaplain is an important one in the life of any organisation, be it schools or secular entities. Rev. Joy would've served as Chaplain at St. Augustine Girls' High School, Naparima Girls' High School, Corinth Teachers' College, The Prisons Chaplaincy, Naparima College and the University of Trinidad and Tobago (UTT).

The St. Andrew's Theological College was fortunate to have the services of Rev. Joy as a Director on the Board of Directors, as Assistant Principal and then as Principal (for two terms from 2002 to 2010). Rev. Joy's sphere of influence also extended beyond the shores of Trinidad. She became one of the most influential leaders the PCTT has ever had. She has managed to craft her own style and respectful flair that defined her reverence. Her representation of the PCTT at international forums made her a most sought-after speaker by affiliate organisations. Her contributions at the Presbyterian Church USA (PC-USA), Caribbean and North American Area Council (CANAAC), the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC) and the World Council of Churches (WCC) have been marked with distinction, elegance and commitment.

Rev. Joy's speaking and preaching at international events representing the PCTT have included Seminars, Conferences and Global Forums throughout the Caribbean, Brazil, Canada, USA, Germany, Switzerland, Thailand, England, Kenya and India.

The journey of Rev. Joy has been blessed to have influenced and touched many lives in the Presbyterian community here and abroad and the other communities in which she served. The PCTT recognises and celebrates her exceptional service to the Church and her representation of the PCTT in various forum. Especially for young girls and women, Rev. Joy is an exemplar of selfless commitment in a life-long vocation of love.

The humble legacy of Rev. Joy's work is one to be respected. The PCTT will be well served in harnessing and tapping into the institutional knowledge and intellectual capacity of this servant leader even after her active service is over.

God bless the Rev. Joy Evelyn Abdul-Mohan and God bless the PCTT.





## KNOW YOUR FAITH

#### **OUR CALLING** REVEREND ADRIAN SIEUNARINE, PRINCIPAL, ST ANDREW'S THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE

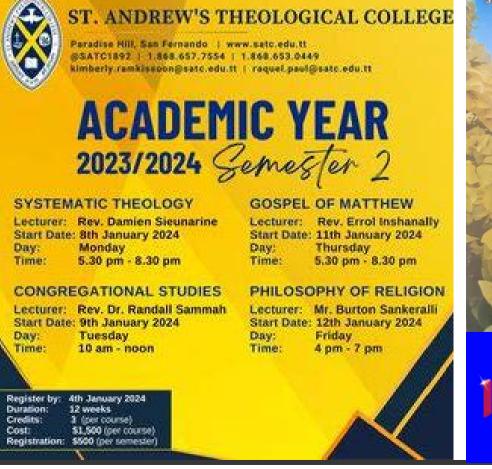
True knowledge, Calvin believed, consists of two things- knowledge of God, and knowledge of ourselves. All energies and enterprises are directed towards either of those goals and when directed to both of those goals, lead us to the great truths of life and eternity.

Everything is created and placed in this universe for a divinely destined purpose. Calvin points out that God has a "special providence sustaining, cherishing, superintending, all the things which he has made, to the very tiniest, even to a sparrow."

When we realize that we are made by God, we come from God, we belong to God and we shall return to God, we gain a fuller understanding of our role and existence. When we give back ourselves to God, we find true happiness and fulfilment:

"We are God's: let us therefore live for him and die for him. We are God's: let his wisdom and will therefore rule out actions. We are God's: let all the parts of our life accordingly strive toward him as our only lawful goal (Rom 14:8, 1 Cor 6:19). Oh how much those people have benefitted who, having been taught that they are not their own, removed arrogant dominion and domination from their own reason that they may yield sovereignty to God!" (Institutes 3.7.15, 19). Calvin explains that we must "use this world without abusing it" and recognise that all things are designed to work together for God's purpose. All that is good is a gift from God.

Calvin declares that "We should also note that there are different kinds of work. Anyone who benefits human society by their industry, either by governing the family, administering public or private business, giving counsel, teaching, or in any other way" is a blessing to themselves, the community, and the world.





Tune in to 103FM to listen to the Lenten Meditations Daily



THE TRINIDAD PRESBYTERIAN

#### THE FAMILY CAN

#### CRISIS IN THE FAMILY: THE BREAKDOWN IN FAMILY LIFE - PART 10 - GOODWILL AND PEACE, ANY?

A MONTHLY THOUGHT TO HELP IMPROVE THE FAMILY - HILTON R SIBOO: CONTACT: 788-2685)

#### THE PILGRIMAGE OF PARENTING

This month, in this first issue of The Trinidad Presbyterian for 2024, I invite you to join me on THE PILGRIMAGE OF PARENTING. It promises to be a series of thoughts that attempt to unravel the difficulties and tighten the bonds within the family. Keeping in mind the PCTT's theme for 2024 **'Pilgrimage of Justice, Reconciliation and Unity'**, I daresay, a family where these are absent can experience anger, hatred, abuse, violence and even death, divorce and separation. Here, for our purposes, family includes single parents, couples, extended, blended, the traditional and modern whether by blood or relational.

You may be wondering what parenting has to do with pilgrimage. We begin with simple working definitions -

**Parenting** is the role of being a parent, who is regarded as the biological and psychosocial guide, role model and counsel of a child. **Pilgrimage** is the journey of a pilgrim, that is one who travels a distance to visit a venerated place e.g. a holy place or shrine.

During our lives we may make several pilgrimages as parents, caregivers, guides and examples for infants, young children, teens, young and older adults and are, at times, called to be parents to the biological couple who offspring us.

However, conceptualizing the pilgrimage of parenting may be complicated since we tend to mainly view pilgrimage from a religious, ritualistic standpoint. Should we consider the parent as a pilgrim towards the venerated place of parenthood, our understanding begins with fact that it is not usually an individual but a group that go on a pilgrimage. As a group going together, the family's pilgrimage may include to church, family home worship or other location, religious, social, cultural, vacation, sports, etc.

Going together requires plans, boundaries, limitations, re-organizing and replanning to face rescheduling arising from disappointments or disasters or to address muster points for meeting after separation to pursue individual or small group interests e.g. shopping. There is respect for self and others by attitude, behaviour, words and actions. Our word is our bond. We do stray or wander, get lost, neglect or refuse to tell our parents or others about our whereabouts. Such an experience indicates that time together is one of Justice, Reconciliation and Unity for a common purpose ... often with agreeing and disagreeing or disagreeing to agree, for decision making, harmony and happy satisfaction for all.

On the pilgrimage of our lives, we are each called to be parents to others, so stay on The Pilgrimage of Parenting.

Remember, the family is not just a group or gathering without a common purpose. Never let it ever be that the family can NOT adjust and adapt as changes occur. **Don't loose faith. Hold strong. Believe, The Family Can** 

Encountering .....the Archives of the Presbyterian Church of Tiinidad and Tobago

Music has inspired and enhanced worship in the Presbyterian Church for centuries. However, early Presbyterian Church (PC) worship did not encourage congregational singing or chanting, [as Roman Catholic Gregorian's choirs and solos] as this was considered a distraction.

Calvin and the Reformed Church subsequently considered the Psalms as the only songs to be sung and under John Knox the Psalter was used in the PC of Scotland. This travelled with the migrants to Nova Scotia, Canada, from which the PC of Canada began it mission with John Morton to the East Indians in Trinidad in 1868, now 156 years.

To the Psalter, supplemental sections were added for services of all seasons, events and persons of all ages. The Psalter can be found at the Archives, as can Hymnals, The Book of Praise, the Hymnary, Sankey's Sacred Songs and Solos and others which we have used, but have you heard of the **Geet Mala** – a compilation printed at Morton's Printery, Tunapuna, for use by the Hindi speaking East Indian converts? There are also many hymns and songs compilations as 'words only' or words and music from various denominations, including Caribbean music at the Archives and the SATC Library.

Over the years, many PCTT church workers and laypersons have continued this music ministry and have composed original music and lyrics and/or have written lyrics sung to existing hymn tunes or have also re-purposed secular words and music of all genres for worship, other services and events.

To note: the Closing Hymn titled: 'God be Praised Our Heavenly Father' sung at the PCTT's 156th Anniversary Service 2024 to the tune: Praise my Soul the King of Heaven were words written by Reverend Daniel Teelucksingh.

The music of our PCTT **MUST** be preserved and be made accessible in the future. We open a space for all who have been engaged in this activity to contact and submit to the Archives collection.

Take this as an opportunity to have a Musical Encounter with the [Central] Archives of the PCTT.

An encounter with the Archives is an encounter with ... yourself. Hoping to be there for your Encounter with the Archives of the Presbyterian Church of Trinidad and Tobago.. Archivist: Reverend Ken K Kalloo, Asst Archivist: Hilton R Bill Siboo 788-2685

Contact: 652-4829 [Synod Office] and 653-4166 [SATC Library], or Visit in person on Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9 a.m. to 12 noon.



Dear Readers, Happy New Year! I wish you all good health and happiness for 2023. It seems as if the year is already flying by with Carnival festivities being right around the corner. If one of your new year resolutions was to keep fit and healthy, this article if for you! Keeping a healthy diet is very important to your physical health and mental health. If you want to lose weight or boost your immune system for the cold and flu season, you can try Lemon Grass and Chamomile into your Diet.

Lemon Grass, also known as Fever Grass (Cymbopogon citratus) is very popular in Trinidad and Tobago and Jamaica. It is a tall, stalky plant which can grow up to six feet and has beautiful blade like leaves with a potent fresh, lemony aroma and a citrus flavor.

## We're Hiring

#### Accounts Clerks / Optical Assistants

Locations: Tunapuna, San Juan, Port of Spain, Diego Martin

#### Requirements

- Five (5) C.X.C. Subjects including Maths and English
- Customer service oriented and Sales Focused
- Twenty two (22) years or older
- Provision of all original academic certificates required
- Previous experience in a Cashier's role will be an asset
- Must be proficient in Microsoft Excel
- Training will be provided

If interested, please submit your resume with portrait photo via our website link below:

valueoptical.com/join-our-team

Suitable applicants will be contacted.

y 💿 😥 valueoptical.com

It is used in Tea where the leaves are tied together into a bouquet and simmered with sugar and water. Lemon grass is known to have Antioxidant, Anti-microbial and Antiinflammatory properties, promote sleep, relieve pain, boost immunity and many more. It is not uncommon to have a Lemon grass and Turmeric tea for the common cough and cold. In other cultures, the grass is used in soups and other dishes.

Growing lemon grass is very easy. Lemon grass is best planted in a container, so it is easy to bring indoors. You can also plant it in the ground. To plant in a container, choose a pot about 30cm (1ft) wide and fill with a peat-free multi-purpose compost, then plant one or two young lemon grass in the centre. Place the pot in a warm, sheltered, sunny location. To plant the ground, choose a site in full sun with fertile, free-draining soil. Space plants at least 30cm (1ft) apart. Lemon grass needs little maintenance. Water regularly and fertilize once monthly with a granular all purpose fertilizer. Lemon grass is best used fresh but can be kept in the fridge for a week or so.

Chamomile, is a herb that comes from the daisy-like flowers of the Asteraceae plant family. To create the tea, simply draw the flowers in some hot water. Its major benefit is aiding in a good night's rest. It contains an antioxidant called Apigenin, which binds to certain receptors in your brain that can promote sleepiness and reduce insomnia. It also lowers your risk of several diseases, including heart disease and cancer. In future articles we will discuss more health benefits that we can acquire from plants and how we can grow them right at home.

#### VICTORIA AVIAN RAJKUMAR (B.E<mark>D., M.ED., CERT. GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING)</mark>

#### THE CASE AGAINST CORPORAL PUNISHMENT: DISCIPLINE WITH LOVE AND BIBLICAL WISDOM

Corporal punishment, defined as the use of physical force to correct or control a child's behaviour, has long been a controversial method of discipline. While some argue that it provides immediate results, a growing body of research and moral considerations suggests that it is not only ineffective but also detrimental to a child's well-being. This article explores why we should refrain from using corporal punishment on children, advocates for discipline with love, and delves into biblical support for nurturing, non-violent methods of guidance.

#### The Ineffectiveness of Corporal Punishment:

Numerous studies have shown that corporal punishment fails to produce lasting behavioural changes in children. Instead, it often leads to increased aggression, antisocial behaviour, and a strained parent-child relationship. Children may comply out of fear, but they do not learn the necessary skills for self-discipline and emotional regulation. Furthermore, the negative effects of corporal punishment can extend into adulthood and affect mental health and overall well-being.

#### **Discipline with Love:**

Disciplining with love involves understanding and meeting a children's emotional needs while guiding them towards responsible behaviour. This approach recognizes that children are still developing emotionally, mentally, and socially. Instead of resorting to physical force, parents can employ effective strategies such as positive reinforcement, setting clear expectations, and implementing logical consequences. By building a strong, supportive relationship with the child, parents create an environment conducive to learning and personal growth.

#### **Biblical Support for Non-Violent Discipline:**

The Bible, a revered guide for many, offers insight into compassionate and non-violent approaches to discipline. Proverbs 22:6 encourages parents to "train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it." This implies the importance of teaching and guiding children with wisdom rather than relying on punishment. Additionally, Ephesians 6:4 advises fathers not to provoke their children to anger but to bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. This emphasizes the need for nurturing, constructive guidance instead of harsh punishment. In conclusion, the case against corporal punishment is supported by both empirical evidence and moral considerations. Discipline with love not only fosters a healthy parent-child relationship but also contributes to the child's long-term development. The Bible, a source of guidance for many, underscores the importance of nurturing, non-violent methods of discipline. By choosing love over punishment, parents can create an environment where children feel secure, loved, and equipped to navigate the complexities of life with resilience and integrity.

#### **CONFIRMATION AT MARABELLA**

Submitted by F Lutchman

Four members were admitted as Communicant members to the Marabella Presbyterian Church on Sunday 3rd December 2023.

Reverend Clifton Mathura, the officiating Minister, based his sermon on the Scripture passage from Luke 1: 5-20 which was read by Mrs. Sabrina Mowlah-Baksh. It was a most inspirational message encouraging the communicants and the overall Congregation to give their lives to Jesus, to be faithful and loyal to Him at all times for He knows what is best for us.



Rev. Clifton Mathura with Confirmed members- Michael Mohess, Tiffany Mohess, Mia Bissoon and Jeremiah Lutchman





#### PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO COMMUNICATIONS UNIT

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MEDIA RELEASE To: All Editors 22nd December, 2023

#### CAPE SUCCESS (22ND December 2023)

The Presbyterian Church of Trinidad and Tobago (PCTT) is elated that the Presbyterian Secondary Schools have performed exceedingly well at this year's CAPE examinations. Presbyterian schools have been able to secure 41 out of the 100 scholarships (45 Open and 55 Additional) for 2023 -

a) Hillview College	- 13	(7 Open; 6 Additional)
b) St. Augustine Girls' High School	- 10	(4 Open; 6 Additional)
c) Naparima College	- 9	(5 Open; 4 Additional)
d) Naparima Girls' High School	- 9	(6 Open; 3 Additional)

In a media release the Ministry of Education has stated that Hillview College has copped the two President's Awards reserved for the outstanding students nationwide -

- · Ryker Harricharan is the top performing student in Environmental Studies, Information and Communication Technology, Mathematics and Natural Sciences.
- · Nishka Maharaj is the top performing student in Business Studies, Creative and Performing Studies, General Studies, Language Studies, Modern Studies/Humanities and Technical Studies.

The Presbyterian Church commends the Presbyterian Secondary Schools' Board of Education and especially the work of the Principals, teachers, students and the many parents who make tremendous sacrifices towards the education of their children.

It must be emphasized that the symbiotic relationship between Church and School is the most important element in the continuous excellence in Educational performance year after year. This can never be overlooked as this is the basis of the success of the Presbyterian schools.

Congratulations and best wishes to all the scholarship winners nationwide and may God's blessing be upon you all.

To God be the glory.

The Presbyterian Church of Trinidad and Tobago 22nd December 2023





Presenting the Naparima Girls' High Ichael 2023 National Scholarship winners SEATED ABOVE - LEFT TO RIGHT: VAREANN ROOPNARINE, CHELSEA HOSEIN, ALISHA RAMPERSAD,

MRS. N. WOODSLEY (V.PRINCIPAL -AG), MRS. K. BALLY (PRINCIPAL-AG), DAYANARA RAGHUNANAN, ARYANA SOOKDEO, ANJANA PERSAD, AALIYAH BIJARAM, AMY MOON?





School's Keshna Rampersad, left, greets President Christine Kangaloo after receiving her medal during a presentation ceremony at President's House, St Ann's, yesterday. At right, is his Excellency Kerwyn Garcia. PICTURE NICOLE DRAYTON

SAMMY'S PRIVATE C.A.P.E. TUTORING	SAMMY'S PRIVATE C.A.P.E. TUTORING
CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2023 C.A.P.E. SCHOLARSHIP	CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2023 C.A.P.E. SCHOLARSHIP
WINNERS	WINNERS
PRESIDENT'S MEDAL AWARDEES (2)	PRESIDENT'S MEDAL AWARDEES (2)
RYKER HARRICHARAN AND NISHKA MAHARAJ	RYKER HARRICHARAN AND NISHKA MAHARAJ
HILLVIEW COLLEGE	HILLVIEW COLLEGE
BRANDON MOHAMMED LIAM KITSINGH SHREYA RAMPERSAD SAMIR MAHABIR	BRANDON MOHAMMED LIAM KITSINGH SHREYA RAMPERSAD SAMIR MAHABIR
NAPARIMA COLLEGE	NAPARIMA COLLEGE
SANDEEP RAMLOCHAN MALIQUE AUGUSTE JONATHAN RAMNARACE	SANDEEP RAMLOCHAN MALIQUE AUGUSTE JONATHAN RAMNARACE
DIVAIO RAMSAMOOJ ZAYDEN RAMKISSOON	DIVAIO RAMSAMOOJ ZAYDEN RAMKISSOON
NAPARIMA GIRLS' HIGH SCHOOL	NAPARIMA GIRLS' HIGH SCHOOL
DAYANARA RAGHUNANAN ALISHA RAMPERSAD ARYANA SOOKDEO	DAYANARA RAGHUNANAN ALISHA RAMPERSAD ARYANA SOOKDEO
KELSEY DE GANNES VAREANN ROOPNARINE AALIYAH BIJARAM	KELSEY DE GANNES VAREANN ROOPNARINE AALIYAH BIJARAM
SHIVA BOYS' HINDU COLLEGE	SHIVA BOYS' HINDU COLLEGE
SHIVANI SINGH FAITH SYLVAN BRADLEY POORAN ALEXIA RAJKUMAR	Shivani singh faith sylvan bradley pooran Alexia Rajkumar
LAKSHMI GIRLS' HINDU COLLEGE HOLY NAME CONVENT- P.O.S	LAKSHMI GIRLS' HINDU COLLEGE HOLY NAME CONVENT- P.O.S
RENITA BHARATSINGH DANEA DIAL GABRIELLA SINGH	RENITA BHARATSINGH DANEA DIAL GABRIELLA SINGH
PRESENTATION COLLEGE- SAN'DO         PRESENTATION COLLEGE-CHAGUANAS           TIAN RAMDATH         DANIEL COX         KURT THOMAS           AVINASH BALROOP         KURT THOMAS         BHAVESH BASDEO	PRESENTATION COLLEGE- SAN'DO         PRESENTATION COLLEGE- CHAGUANAS           TIAN RAMDATH         DANIEL COX         KURT THOMAS           AVINASH BALROOP         KURT THOMAS         BHAVESH BASDEO
ST.AUGUSTINE GIRLS' HIGH SCHOOL ST. BENEDICT'S COLLEGE SHIAYN HARRINARINE JEROME ABHIRAM	ST.AUGUSTINE GIRLS' HIGH SCHOOL         ST. BENEDICT'S COLLEGE           SHIAYN HARRINARINE         JEROME ABHIRAM
ST.FRANCOIS GIRLS' COLLEGE ST.JOSEPSH'S CONVENT- P.O.S	ST.FRANCOIS GIRLS' COLLEGE ST.JOSEPSH'S CONVENT- P.O.S
MARISSA-ANN WILLIAMS CIARA FLETCHER	MARISSA-ANN WILLIAMS CIARA FLETCHER
ST. JOSEPH'S CONVENT- SAN'DO ST. JOSEPH'S CONVENT- ST.JOSEPH	ST. JOSEPH'S CONVENT- SAN'DO ST. JOSEPH'S CONVENT- ST.JOSEPH
ARANA RILEY ANUPRIYA PERSADIE ALISHA LAKHAN	ARANA RILEY ANUPRIYA PERSADIE ALISHA LAKHAN
SAMMY'S PRIVATE C.A.P.E. SCHOLARSHIP	SAMMY'S PRIVATE C.A.P.E. SCHOLARSHIP
WINNERS	WINNERS
PRESIDENT'S MEDAL AWARDEES (2) RYKER HARRICHARAN AND NISHKA MAHARAJ HILLVIEW COLLEGE	PRESIDENT'S MEDAL AWARDEES (2) RYKER HARRICHARAN AND NISHKA MAHARAJ HILLVIEW COLLEGE BRANDON MOHAMMED LIAM KITSINGH SHREYA RAMPERSAD SAMIR MAHABIR
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AVINASH BALROOP         KURT THOMAS	AVINASH BALROOP         KURT THOMAS
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ST.FRANCOIS GIRLS' COLLEGE ST.JOSEPSH'S CONVENT- P.O.S MARISSA-ANN WILLIAMS CIARA FLETCHER	ST.FRANCOIS GIRLS' COLLEGE         ST.JOSEPSH'S CONVENT- P.O.S           MARISSA-ANN WILLIAMS         CIARA FLETCHER
ST. JOSEPH'S CONVENT- SAN'DO         ST. JOSEPH'S CONVENT- ST.JOSEPH           ARANA RILEY         ANUPRIYA PERSADIE         ALISHA LAKHAN	ST. JOSEPH'S CONVENT- SAN'DO         ST. JOSEPH'S CONVENT- ST.JOSEPH           ARANA RILEY         ANUPRIYA PERSADIE         ALISHA LAKHAN
SWAHA HINDU COLLEGE (SANGRE GRANDE)	SWAHA HINDU COLLEGE (SANGRE GRANDE)
LAKSHMI MAHARAJ-SOOKRAJ	LAKSHMI MAHARAJ-SOOKRAJ

Paparima College

## FOUNDED 1894



Niall Hosein winner of the President's Medal, Gold, for Higher Secondary Education based on the results of CAPE 2021!

## Paparima Cóllege Founded 1894

Christopher Akow, winner of the President's Medal, Silver, for Primary Education based on the results of SEA 2022!

THE TRINIDAD PRESBYTERIAN

#### **BLESSED AND HIGHLY FAVOURED**

Submitted by Stephanie Sam



On Saturday 13th January 2024, loved ones, friends, and colleagues of the late Reverend. Anthony Keith Rampersad (1958-2023) ventured to the Autistic Society of Trinidad and Tobago (ASTT) at Ragoo Road, Dabadie. Reverend Rampersad had a special love for the Autistic Society where he started several projects and loved interacting with the children. To honour him and keep his legacy alive the family and spiritual family of the late Reverend Rampersad joined together with members from the UWI Presbyterian Youth Connect, Morton Memorial Presbyterian Youths (MMPY), Aramalaya Presbyterian Youth Fellow (APYF), Members of the Synod Office of the PCTT and the rest of the PCTT community in spreading joy and love to these amazing children at ASTT. A special blessing was done by our dear Reverend. Joy Abdul-Mohan and Ms. Stephanie Baldeosingh (UWI Presbyterian President) presented the items to Ms. Amoy Boodoo (Centre Manager of ASTT).



THE TRINIDAD PRESBYTERIAN

#### TRAINING IN MISSION PROGRAM: CARIBBEAN YOUTH INITIATIVE IN PEACE BUILDING, WELLNESS, RESILIENCY & PEER MEDIATION

Submitted by Deaconess Amber Seesahai-Payne

#### "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God" - Matthew 5:9

The Council for World Mission (CWM), in collaboration with The International University of the Caribbean (IUC), held a transformative two-week certificate training program on Peace Building, Wellness, Resiliency & Peer Mediation as part of their Training in Mission Program. From the 5th to the 19th of November, participants hailing from Jamaica, Guyana, the South Pacific, South Africa. India, Bangladesh, Singapore, and Taiwan, along with Deaconess Amber Seesahai-Payne and Rishi Sohan representing Trinidad and Tobago and the Presbyterian Church of Trinidad and Tobago, joined together in the vibrant city of Kingston, Jamaica, to be a part of this beautiful experience.

This melting pot of cultures and perspectives added a richness to our collective learning experience as the program aimed to empower youth participants with the skills needed for effective conflict resolution. We were trained in the art of serving as neutral mediators, fostering understanding, and facilitating agreement among disputing parties.



The training went beyond the classroom, immersing us in after-school programs designed as interventions for children affected by domestic and community violence and crime. Our journey ventured beyond Kingston as we visited the rural heart of Jamaica, Mandeville. Each participant, hosted by different families, had the chance to collaborate with various Reverends, applying peace-building ideas within the context of their churches.

Our experience of this program transformed us into the peacemakers God calls us to be in our world, country and PCTT. We eagerly look forward to sharing our new gained knowledge with those around us and we extend our heartfelt gratitude to CWM, ICU and PCTT for providing us with this opportunity.





CONGRATS to Guaico-Presbyterian Steel-Orchestra, 3-time winning and defending Champion Steel Orchestra, on becoming the Runner-up (placing 2nd) at the National Junior Panorama (Primary School category), and to drummer, Darius Walcott, on receiving the "Best Young Drummer" award.

#### PAN IN THE YARD AT MARABELLA PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH Submitted by Florabelle Lutchman

What comes to your mind when you hear the words "Pan in the Yard?"

It was a wonderful, exciting evening of musical talent put on by the Marabella Steel Orchestra on Saturday 16th December 2023.The Program - Rejoice in the Spirit of Christmas and labelled 'Pan in the Yard' took the place of what was formerly known by the community as 'Pan Over the Wall.'

Numerous persons from the church and community attended this event. The Chairman of the Local Board, Mr. Terrence Mohamed, welcomed everyone and said the opening prayer. Attendees were doubly welcomed by Mrs. Annette Paul, the PRO of the Band. She gave a brief, comprehensive history of the Steel Orchestra, and introduced the very competent Chairperson, Mr. Nazim Mohammed. The entire ninety-minute concert which included the Marabella Steel Orchestra, Guest Artistes and Dancers took place on the compound of the Marabella Presbyterian Church. Guest Artistes included: Mr Vincent Ramkhellawan who was amazing with his fabulous voice singing "When a Child is born" and "Holly Jolly Christmas." Mr. Michael Ramlal was another awesome voice that thrilled the crowd, talented Saxophonist Mr. Terron Abner and his brilliant young son, Ethan, accompanying him on the pan, Winston and Beverly Seupaul a talented duo with "The Greatest Gift of All," and four lovely, angelic dancers: Privanka and Parisha Ramdeen, Kayla Ramjit and Elisha Ali dancing to Soca Santa. The Band, Dynamics, sang a Parang Medley.

And, of course the Steel Orchestra was in its element, thrilling the crowd with its varied superbly played Christmas pieces. Mr. Marlon Paul, leader of the Steel Orchestra, was presented with a token of appreciation for all the hard work he put in with the Orchestra.

The Congregation, friends and family, and the general community thoroughly enjoyed this evening of fantastic performances engendering the Christmas Spirit in all.

Dinner was provided for all after the concert. This was blessed by Reverend Clifton Mathura, Minister of the Marabella/Bonne Aventure Pastoral Region. He closed the evening in prayer.





#### WISDOM BEYOND AGES Submitted by Lisandra Seecharan. The UWI Presbyterian Youth Connect

The book of Proverbs in the Bible is called one of the "wisdom books" that provides golden nuggets of advice in every verse. Acting without wisdom is described as cutting wood with a dull axe- tiring and inefficient with no real reward.

As university students, we are obliged to make decisions within our particular milieu every day and they must be based on more than just a gut feeling and advice from our friends. In society today, we are fooled to think that following God's Word is like confining ourselves to rules that are against enjoying life, however, it is within these words of advice that we achieve real success, true happiness and amplify our authenticity. Here are two examples:



"If you stay calm, you are wise, but if you have a hot temper, you only show how stupid you are" (Proverbs 14:29 GNT).

Sometimes, we are moved to speak up and out immediately in a volatile way, but the Bible presents us with a wiser way to do this. By taking time to breathe and remain calm, as hard as it is, we are able to clear our mind and speak with intelligence rather than raising our voice. We, therefore, maintain control of our erratic emotions versus letting our emotions control us.

"Lazy people should learn a lesson from the way ants live. They have no leader, chief, or ruler, but they store up their food during the summer, getting ready for winter" (Proverbs 6:6-8 GNT).

Proverbs also give us timetested and practical ways to achieve success even in our studies by early preparation during the semester for finals instructed by our own discipline.

We, therefore, encourage you to read Proverbs with us and learn love wisdom through to reverence for God. from whom all wisdom flows.

#### CONGRATULATIONS MISS ARIEL ALI

Miss Ariel Ali a member of the St Julien Presbyterian Church graduated with First Class Honors in a B.Sc. Degree In Information Technology from the University of Bedfordshire through CTS College.





#### HOPE ABOUNDS AT EBENEZER PRESBYTERIAN

Submitted by Dr. La Daana Kada Kanhai (Local Board Member)

In the midst of all that is going on in the world, there is hope! This was the message that resounded on Sunday 3rd December 2023, at the Ebenezer Presbyterian Church in Claxton Bay. On this first Sunday of Advent, the candle signifying 'hope' was lit. Sunday School children and youths took the stage and delivered a heart-warming re-enactment of the Nativity. The congregation was treated to scenes with Mary and Joseph, the innkeeper, the shepherds and their sheep, the wisemen, the angels and finally baby Jesus. This performance was arranged by the Sunday School Teachers: Mrs. Debbie Bridglal and Ms. Melanie Padarath, and the Youth Group Coordinators: Mrs. Cindy Pancham and Mrs. Melisa Sammy, and narrated by one of our youths, Mr. Levi Nurse.

The Ebenezer Choir, accompanied on the keyboard by Mr. James Sammy and on the steelpan by Mr. Robert Sammy, serenaded attendees throughout the service. Reverend Satnarine Ramnath led in worship and opened the Creche. All who passed by the church's compound on that Sunday evening must have heard the carols and saw the lighted candles shining brightly in the hands of attendees. Α potluck Christmas dinner organized by the Local Board and supported by various long-standing members followed the service. Approximately 100 persons attended this event and all had the opportunity to fellowship over a shared meal in a beautifully decorated sanctuary. During a time when there is local, regional and international turmoil, it is events like these that remind us of who we are and whose we are. It is events like these that remind us that we are members of a community of believers.

May the hope, love and joy that we are filled with during the month of December 2023 overflow into the New Year 2024!





#### **CRECHE BLESSINGS AT ARIMA**

The first Sunday of Advent coincided with Holy Communion and two separate services were held at Arima. The Resident Minister, Reverend Emmanuel Ramdeen, resumed after his vacation and officiated at the morning service when the advent candle of hope was lit, the liturgy was conducted by our choir members.

The Chairman of the Local Board, Elder, Mr. Kenrick Cumberbatch, brought greetings on behalf of the Minister, and the Local Board. He thanked Reverend Adrian Sieunarine for accepting the invitation to be our guest preacher at our Creche Opening and Christmas dinner which commenced promptly at 4.30 p.m. Reverend Sieunarine's message was based on Isaiah 9: 6-7 and The Gospel of Luke 2: 8-20. "To us a Child is Born." Both ministers shared in the service.

Preparation commenced days before with members decorating the church and hall to create the ambiance for the Advent Season. The ladies of our congregation gave of their time, talent, and resources to decorate the chancel. The church hall was also exquisitely decorated for dining. Submitted by Neerala Cumberbatch

The creche was once again beautifully constructed and decorated by Mr. Krishna Jugmohan and Mr. Kenny Moorley.

The evening saw the streaming in of members as early as one hour before the scheduled start. The congregation reflected an intergenerational assembly that exceeded one hundred and fifty comprising Sunday school children and youths with their parents and grand-parents, members of our sister congregation and many invited guests.

The afternoon proceedings were conducted by the guest preacher, Reverend Adrian Sieunarine, who was ably assisted by our Resident Minister Reverend Emmanuel Ramdeen.

The evening took on a concert like atmosphere as the choir serenaded the congregation with their anthems, and the congregation in turn sang out lustily selected Christmas songs. The members of the Youth Group were well received with their medley of timeless Christmas carols. The highlight of the evening was the performance of the Sunday School children who enacted the nativity scene much to the delight of the entire congregation. The costumes worn by the children were exquisitely designed and their performances were executed to precision. It was indeed very refreshing to see the children perform with joy in their hearts. We thank their teachers for the tremendous effort and commitment to the long hours of practise.

At the end of the brilliant performances by the Sunday School and Youth Group, they were led in procession to the Creche to the singing of the hymn "What Child Is This" followed by the blessing of the Creche by Reverend Adrian Sieunarine.

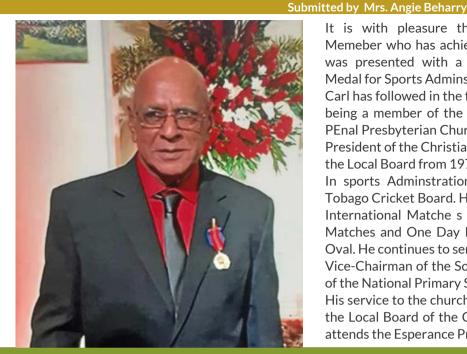
The illumination of lights from the creche and Christmas tree and the fellowship that followed over the sumptuous meal brought a fitting climax to a wonderful evening well spent in church.

I am certain that all went away saying, "It was good to be in the house of the Lord."



THE TRINIDAD PRESBYTERIAN

#### HUMMINGBIRD SILVER MEDAL FOR MR CARL BIRJAH



It is with pleasure that we congratulate aother Presbyterian Memeber who has achieved a significant milestone, Mr. Carl Birjah was presented with a National Award, the Hummingbird Silver Medal for Sports Adminstrationn and Loyalty to the Country

Carl has followed in the footsteps of his grandparents and parents in being a member of the Presbyterian Church. He has served in the PEnal Presbyterian Church as a Sunday School Teacher, member and President of the Christian Endeavour Group and even as Secretary of the Local Board from 1973 to 1977.

In sports Adminstration, he was a member of the Trinidad and Tobago Cricket Board. He reached the level of being Secretary of the International Matche s Committee. He was also in charge of Test Matches and One Day International Matches at the Queen;s PArk Oval. He continues to serve the National Cricket and os presently the Vice-Chairman of the South Zone. Carl was also a founding member of the National Primary Schools' Cricket League 1992.

His service to the church is not over as yet. He also was a member of the Local Board of the Canaan Presbyterian Church. At Present, he attends the Esperance Presbyterian Church.

#### KRIST MANDLI PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH CELEBRATES HARVEST THANKSGIVING Submitted by Nerissa Sahadeo



The Krist Mandli Presbyterian Church of the Diamond Pastoral Region celebrated its Harvest Thanksgiving on Sunday 26th November 2023. The Minister of the Diamond Pastoral Region, Reverend Stephen Harripersad, officiated at the service. Members of the Local Board and the congregation worked assiduously to prepare thirty-five (35) bags of market produce which were generously donated by members.



The bags included produce such as peppers (pimento and hot), garlic, onion, bhagi, patchoi, melongene, potatoes, plantains and ochroes. There was no more room in the bags for the squash and seasoning which were also provided. These bags were distributed to every family in the congregation. Members of the Local Board also offered a delivery service to those who were absent from the morning service.

The Local Board was aided in the Harvest Thanksgiving activity through the generous donations of the members of the congregation. We are indebted to the Jogie and Gildharry families for their substantial donations.

Reverend Harripersad's sermon was based on Psalms 100 and 121. The latter psalm affirming the enduring nature of God's protection and the former, a hymn of praise to the goodness of God.

We give God all the honor, glory and praise for our bountiful harvest and seek His continued blessings and guidance as we forge ahead as a church.

#### A JOYOUS MILESTONE: REFORM PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH'S 110TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

In a radiant evening service on December 3rd, 2023, members of the Reform Presbyterian Church gathered in heartfelt celebration of 110 years of faith, fellowship, and unwavering devotion.

Minister of the Marabella Bonne Aventure Region, Reverend Clifton Mathura guided the congregation through the transformative verses of Luke 1:5-20 read by elder-Mrs. Charmaine Ramrattan-Bainey. He emphasized the timeless wisdom in seeking God in times of need, being grateful for His blessings, and rejoicing in the blessings of others.

The service unfolded with members representing arms of the church, Local Board, PCW & SS presenting a litany crafted by Reverend Joy Abdul-Mohan, setting the tone for the lighting of the first Advent candle of 'Hope'. The sanctuary resonated with the soul-stirring melodies of the choir, led by Mr. Vincent Ramkhelawan, eloquently rendering "In Jesus Name" and "I Speak Jesus," reaffirming the church's profound identity as the cherished bride of Jesus Christ.

Overflowing with youthful exuberance, over 20 Sunday School students and teachers presented an endearing acrostic entitled "FAITH," encapsulating the essence of the congregation's enduring commitment. **Contributed by Lennox Sankersingh** 



Honoring the church's rich history, Elder and Chairperson of the L. Bd. Ms. Tracy A Doman, took the congregation on a journey through time. Awards were presented to our longstanding pillars: Mrs. Camille Koorasingh, Mr. Harold Nemai, Mrs. Florence Nemai, Honorary Elder Mr. Morton Adharsingh, by elders Mrs. Indra Doman & Mrs. Charmaine Ramrattan-Bainey. Additionally, Dr. Stefan Beharry received an award on behalf of Reverend Sanva Beharry, as the first ever Minister of Word and Sacrament of PCTT from the Reform congregation.

A poignant moment unfolded as The Reverend Mathura dedicated a Memorial Board, bearing 49 names, as a testament to the indelible mark left by departed members who tirelessly contributed to our church's legacy. A special plaque immortalized the late Honorary Elder, Mrs. Afrose Sampath, for her unwavering dedication at our congregation. Mr. Roosevelt Jacob, Vice-Chairperson, thanked our Minister and his wife for their contribution towards our church, as tokens were presented to them. This celebration extended beyond the sanctuary with the official dedication and illumination of the outdoor Crèche, symbolizing the enduring light of faith within the congregation. The joyous occasion saw the rekindling of both new and old members, fostering a sense of unity and continuity.

Beyond the spiritual nourishment, the service was a visual feast with beautiful decor enhancing the sacred atmosphere. After-service refreshments provided a warm and communal extension of the celebration, fostering fellowship among congregants.

As hymns of praise and worship echoed, and the spirit-filled service unfolded, it was evident that the Reform Presbyterian Church's 110th Anniversary celebration was a resounding blessing to all present. In unity and gratitude, the Reform Presbyterian Church celebrated its rich history, honored its stalwart members, and embraced the future with renewed faith. The evening served as a beacon of blessings, bringing joy and inspiration to all present, fostering a sense of community that has defined the church for over a century.

#### **NEW YEAR'S EVE BONFIRE AT TABAQUITE**



It was an evening to remember on the 31st of December, 2023 as members of the Tabaquite Pastoral Region gathered at the Tabaquite Presbyterian Church to usher in the New Year.

The youths of the region led in the afternoon's praise and worship. Representatives from each Church read the scriptures and led in singing and prayer. Reverend Robert Dinnoo brought an inspiring message based upon Joshua 1:6-9 and Hebrews 11:1-3 & 6 on the theme Faith Over Fear. He challenged the congregation to enter the new year with their eyes fixed on the Lord. He emphasized that we must all "Be strong and courageous; do not be frightened or dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go."

Presiding Elder Roy Ramlogan led in the celebration of the Agape Feast. He urged the congregation to recall the significance of sharing in this meal as a symbol of our love for one another and more importantly the sacrifice of Christ on our behalf.

As we reflected upon 2023 each person wrote down 5 things they wanted to leave behind. Everyone then gathered around the bonfire on the church's ground for a moment of prayer and personal reflection. Members then threw their lists into the fire, hopeful that 2024 will bring about positive changes.

The congregation was then treated to delicious refreshments including corn soup, hot dogs, sandwiches and a wide array of cakes, soft drinks and other delicacies. We pray that God will strengthen our Region in 2024 as we place all our hopes and plans into his hands.

#### THE GOODNESS OF GOD THROUGH MAN, WE EITHER ACCEPT OR REJECT Submitted by Elijah Motieram

In this uncertain world where goodness is questioned, God's light does shine. There lies a path, a journey, both yours and mine.

For in this world, we face trials and tests. So we forge our souls, to bring out our best. God's goodness, a beacon, a guiding light, through darkness and struggles, it shines so bright. But, on this path, we encounter a sorrow, when those who need help, refuse to accept and borrow. A tragedy unfolds, as hearts turn away, from the wisdom and love, that could light their way. With open arms, we offer our aid, yet some choose ignorance, their own path they've made. Oh, the sadness we feel, when they suffer in vain, the innocent souls, burdened by their own disdain. Ignorance and arrogance, a toxic blend, leaving the innocent to suffer, to contend. But in this journey, we must not despair, for God's goodness remains, always aware. Through our own tests, we grow stronger still, to help others, despite the uphill. For in the face of adversity, we find our strength, to rise above, to go to any length. To offer compassion, understanding, and care, even when faced with the unaware. So let us remember, in times of dismay, that God's goodness prevails, come what may. And though some may reject the help we extend, we must persevere, our love to transcend. For in the end, it is not for us to judge, but to embody God's goodness, never to begrudge. To be a beacon of hope, a guiding light, and trust in God's plan, both day and night.

#### THE RATOOS UNCEASING GRATITUDE AT WARRENVILLE Submitted by Stephen Kangal

For forty -four years the Ratoo family of Munroe Road, who worships at Warrenville Presbyterian Church (WPC), religiously and devotedly maintained an unbroken tradition of Thanksgiving to the Lord for the many bounties and blessings that they have received from the Lord. They usually host a Service at their home on the first Sunday of each year when they invite the Warrenville PC and the wider Munroe Road community to share in their fellowship marked by an attitude of abundant gratitude. This year's Thanksgiving Service was conducted by Reverend Sanya Beharry with musical accompaniment by Dr Kavish Seetahal who also led the pre-service Singspiration session.

Serving the best to the invitees is an aspect of The Ratoos gratitude to God. They did so with an array of exquisite palate-teasing culinary delights designed to make everyone happy and fulfilled. This has become a community event that the Ratoos cherish.

Scripture was read by Mrs. Kamini Ratoo while Ashley Soomai and Ralph Paul offered tributes in the memory of the deceased parents and grand -parents of the Ratoo clan.

Reverend Beharry congratulated the Ratoos for observing 44 years of unbroken gratitude to God and made an appeal for the demonstration of more love and affection within families and communities inclusive of adopting a more caring and loving socialization of the young.

The annual Ratoos' Thanksgiving Service is a much anticipated prayerful and enjoyable event in the calendar of events of the WPC.



Photograph shows Reverend Beharry presiding at the Service held on 7th January



#### **PRAYERS FOR HEALING**

#### Submitted by Presiding Elder George K. Sammy

#### INTRODUCTION

Lent, our annual season of prayer and fasting, comes early this year. As a result of the COVID 19 Pandemic, many of us have become more aware of the importance of prayer in our lives. This includes prayers for healing, and this article documents the basis for such prayers from Bible verses, and then discusses certain characteristics of those prayers.

#### THE BASIS OF PRAYERS FOR HEALING

The basis of prayers for healing can be found in God's promises of healing in the Old Testament and Jesus' practice of healing in the Gospels.

#### God's Promises of Healing

God's promises of healing are found throughout the Old Testament, the earliest in Exodus 23:25 where God promises to take sickness away from the midst of the people. In Psalm 41:3, we read that the Lord sustains His people on their sickbed and restores them from their bed of illness, while in Psalm 103 God is praised for forgiveness of all our sins, healing all our diseases and redeeming our life from destruction. Again, in Psalm 147:3, we are told that it is fitting and pleasant to praise God, who heals the broken in heart and binds up their wounds.

In Isaiah 57:19, God offers peace both to those who are far off and those who are near, and promises to heal them. In verse 18, God even promises to heal one who is backsliding in the way of his heart, a note of comfort to all of us! Jeremiah 30:17 reads: **"But I will restore you to health and heal your wounds, declares the Lord"** (New International Version – NIV); while in Jeremiah 33:6 God promises to bring health and healing to Jerusalem and heal God's people.

#### Jesus Practice of Healing

Because Jesus' practice of healing was so prevalent, we call Him "the Great Physician". Of the many times that Jesus performed healings in the Gospels (reported to be 26, see <u>https://christianhealingtoday.com/2008/10/1</u> <u>6/a-list-of-jesus-healings/</u>), two examples are given here. In Matthew 9:35, we are told that "Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness" (NIV). And in Luke 6:19 we are told "and the people all tried to touch him, because power was coming from him and healing them all" (NIV).

#### CHARACTERISTICS OF PRAYERS FOR HEALING

Based on guidance provided in the Bible and from other sources, prayers for healing should be:

 $\bigcirc$  Direct and Specific,  $\bigcirc$  Personal, and  $\bigcirc$  Confident.

#### **Direct and Specific**

In Psalm 6:2, the psalmist cries out, "Have mercy on me, LORD, for I am faint; heal me, LORD, for my bones are in agony" (NIV). This is a very direct appeal, saying exactly what he wishes the Lord to attend to. Similarly, Isaiah 33:2 says, "Lord, be gracious to us; we long for you. Be our strength every morning, our salvation in time of distress." Again, the prophet is specific; about what is requested (God's graciousness) and about when it is needed (every morning, meaning at all times, but especially in times of distress). Our prayers for healing should follow this pattern of directness and specificity.Let us avoid the common misconception that if we pray plenty words God will hear us better, since there is no evidence (biblical or otherwise) to support this.

#### Personal

In Philippians 4:6 we are instructed, **"Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God"** (NIV). In other words, our every care can and should be brought before God in prayer. But different persons have different cares, so we can best obey this instruction on a personal basis. However, this is not to deny the importance of communal prayer; and as we pray together as a congregation, our prayers should be specific to the needs of our people (see "Leading in Prayer: a Workbook for Worship" by Hughes Oliphant Old, page 181). Our pastoral prayers, in particular, should include supplications for the needs of specific individuals (see "Presbyterian Worship: a Guide for Clergy" by J. Dudley Weaver, Jr, page 55). Therefore, whether we pray individually or collectively, our prayers – and especially our prayers of healing - should focus on the personal needs of individuals.

#### Confident

Perhaps the best-known statement of confidence in God's guidance is found in Verse 4 of Psalm 23 (NIV):

"Even though I walk through the darkest valley,

I will fear no evil, for you are with me;

your rod and your staff, they comfort me."

The request in Jeremiah 17:14 contains a similar declaration:

"Heal me, Lord, and I will be healed;

save me and I will be saved,

for you are the one I praise."

And Hebrews 4:16 is an invitation: "Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need."

These three passages all indicate that we can be confident of God's blessings and guidance in our lives, and our prayers for healing should reflect this confidence.

#### **CLOSING COMMENTS**

God has clearly promised to heal our infirmities, and Jesus made a practice of healing during His earthly ministry. When we need to pray for healing of ourselves or of others, our prayers should be direct/specific, personal and offered with confidence. And like the woman who touched Jesus robe (see Mark 5:25-34), we who pray for healing must put our faith into action. Paraphrasing her words, we too must say, "If I just reach out and touch Jesus, I will be healed."

#### A TRIBUTE TO THE LATE DR BEHARRY

One of the highlights of the Creche opening at Waterloo Presbyterian church was the lighting of our two Christmas trees planted by the late Dr Selwyn Beharry. The trees were planted before his death at a tree planting ceremony. Three of his four children were present to pay tribute to their father and light the tree which was lit for the first time in his memory. They were Selwyn Beharry Jr., Christiana Beharry, and Briana Beharry.

Their tribute was as follows: "We are very thankful for the opportunity to light the Christmas tree that out father planted in this yard five years ago before his death. Coincidentally, it was a Christmas morning that our father, first entered this church and decided to become a member. It is therefore very appropriate that we can remember him at this time and we are very grateful for this. Our father was a servant of God and this was reflected in his service to God, the church, and his patients. He practised servant leadership, and giving and serving was his lifestyle, expecting nothing in return. We remember him for his love and dedication and most of all for the father he was to us. We will always be proud of him and remember him for his ideology and what he stood for. We are proud of you daddy and may you rest in peace. We love you forever."

Alethea Beharry who could not be there because of commitments elsewhere sent her regards in the following words: "My father was the first man I ever loved and will always love. He was kind, ambitious and so smart. He was fond of using his culinary skills to cook his favourite foods for us. Dad loved nature, he loved animals and if he were alive would have had a dog farm. He loved to fish. Navigating life is not easy as we all know and my father tried. I truly believe that he had the power to save the world making an input in his own way. Everyday I draw strength from him



He saw me for who I am and held me up higher than I did for myself. Whenever I think about those trees that he planted at the church, I would like to think that, just like nature, his memory will live and grow forever. I am thankful to have had the opportunity to know him. Until I see him again, like his memory I will live on."





THE TRINIDAD PRESBYTERIAN

### IN LOVING MEMORY

#### Kay Ramlakhan



Sunrise: 30th. December.1947 Sunset: 28th. January.2016.

Member or the Penal Presbyterian Church, Lovingly remembered by her Husband Willvan, 4 Children; 8 Grandchildren; 4 In-Laws; Friends and Relatives

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#### CECELIA PARSOTAN

Sunrise - 26th May, 1934 Sunset - 4th January, 2023

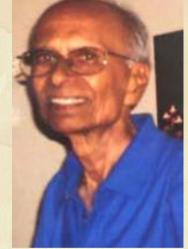
Your life was a blessing, your memory a treasure. You are loved beyond words and missed beyond measure. Sadly missed by your children, grandchildren, in laws, family and friends.

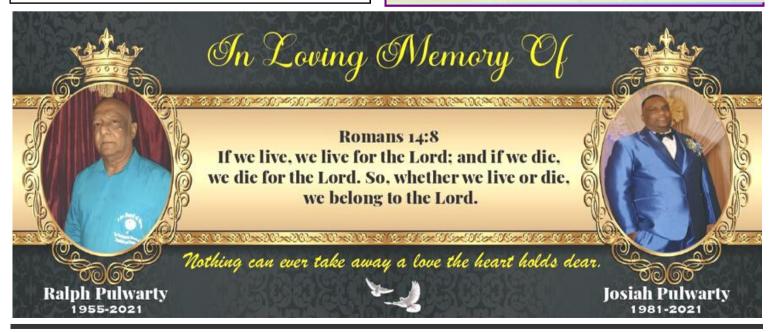


#### Harold Latchu

Sunrise - 30-09-1931 Sunset - 02-06-2020 GONE BUT NOT FORGOTTEN Lovingly remembered by his Wife, Fatima (Dolly); Children: Dennis (Sheryl), Glen (Shamo), Maureen (RichardDeceased), Ronald (Karen) and Susanne (Kiran).

Grandchildren: Ryan (Samara), Lisa (Adriel), Dominic (Stephanie), Tristan, Kavi, Ketan, Shreeya Ria and Ross. Siblings: (Joyce), Robert (Shirley), Violet (John-Deceased), Harris (Meg), Joyce (Leo) and Babsie (Roland). and many more...





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Submitted by Mrs. Candace Mahabir





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