

The Methodist Church in the Caribbean and the Americas

LEEWARD ISLANDS DISTRICT CONFERENCE

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30th August 2022

Dear Brothers and Sisters

I greet you in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, as we begin the new church year, 2022 – 2023. Guided by God's divine grace, we continue to operate under the District theme of, **"Trusting God in Difficult Times: Transforming Obstacles into Opportunities."**

Hence, as we come to the beginning of this church year, we cannot help but look back in retrospect on the year that has past, and, with the hymn writer, John Newton, testify, "Through many dangers, toils, and snares, I [we] have already come; 'Tis grace hath brought me [us] safe thus far, and grace will lead me [us] home."

I wish to express my sincere gratitude to those of you who have been faithful in serving God and his church through the year that is past, in whatever office or capacity of the church's life, we have served. God values your commitment to his church and honors your service to him.

I wish to use this opportunity to celebrate with all of you who had occasions during the year under review, and continue to offer prayerful support for those who faced situations that were and continue to be challenging. We are confident that the God who called us, will not abandoned us, but will remain with us unto the very end.

As the church new year dawns upon us, let us be assured of God's continued presence in our lives, amidst all the challenges facing us at this time: war in Ukraine, high cost of living, continued presence of the COVID virus, monkey pox, global warming, political upheavals, to mention only a few.

One of the focuses for this year, would be the launching of Unified Strategic Direction, an initiative of the Connexional Conference in collaboration with the "We Can" arm of the British Methodist Church.

This initiative is meant to stimulate growth and vitality in all areas of the churches across the Conference Area, including our own District. We would hear much more about this in the coming weeks and months.

215 YEARS AS A DISTRICT 1806-2021

* Circuits/Missions: Anguilla • Antigua • Aruba • British Virgin Islands • Curacao • Dominica • Holland • Montserrat • Nevis • St Croix • St Eustatius • St Kitts • St Maarten • St Martin • St Thomas/St John • Guadeloupe Mission *

"Trusting God in Difficult Times: Transforming Obstacles into Opportunities"

While we wait to roll this out, we would want to ensure that we set this and all other plans for the work of God among us in their proper perspective, that is, ensuring that we are grounded in Christ especially as we bear in mind, that, “Unless the LORD builds the house, the builders labor in vain.”

More and more, I am convinced that if we are genuine in the profession of our faith, then we will experience that renewal we seek, not only in our individual lives, but also as a church. In so doing, we will not give way to the fears of our founder, John Wesley who made a very insightful observation when he said,

“I am not afraid that the people called Methodists should ever cease to exist either in Europe or America. But I am afraid lest they should only exist as a dead sect, having the form of religion without the power. And this undoubtedly will be the case unless they hold fast both the doctrine, spirit, and discipline with which they first set out.”

I urge us therefore to heed the advice of the Apostle when he exhorted us, “to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires,²³ and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds,²⁴ and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.” (Ephesians 4:22-24 - English Standard Version)

I close, mindful of the fact, that we are in hurricane season, and the season of drastic climate change. Let us then take all the necessary precautions to protect against life and property and continually seek the favor of God upon us and all people everywhere.

Yours in our Master’s Service



Bishop Charles A. Seaton
District President

