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Stewardship
MONTH

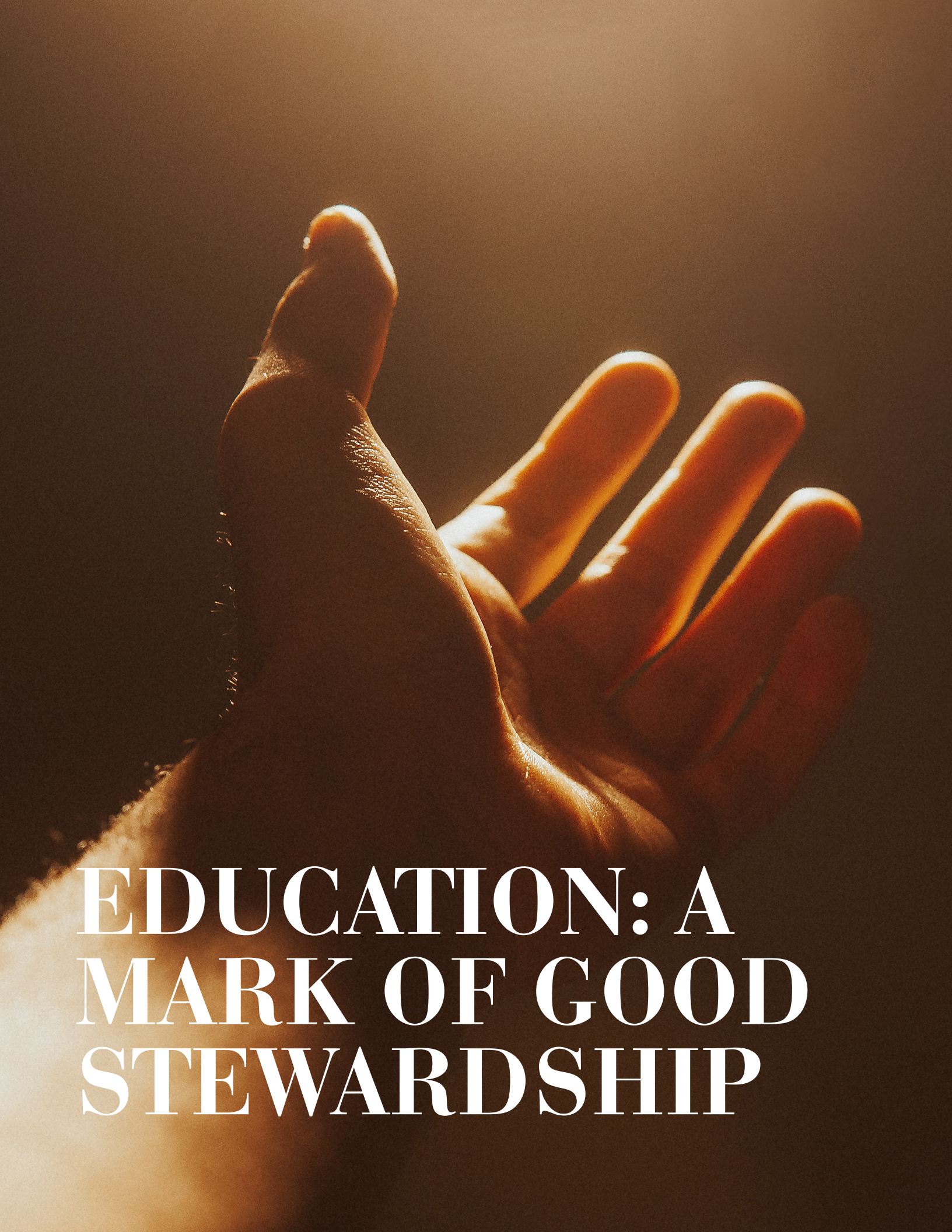
GROWING IN GIVING

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EDUCATION: A MARK OF GOOD STEWARDSHIP

Moderator *speaks*

This is Stewardship month for us in the Presbyterian Church of Trinidad and Tobago (PCTT). It also marks the 45th Republic Day of our beloved country. As a church community we are urged to offer fervent prayers as we observe these two events, and in doing so, we remember all those who have been adversely affected by natural disasters and political dislocations, both here and elsewhere. We empathise with the many citizens of our country whose homes and livestock have been destroyed by flooding; our Haitian sisters and brothers who lost their lives in the recent earthquake; and the thousands of citizens who fled Afghanistan when that country was overrun by the infamous Taliban, which is, steeped in ideological fanaticism.

This volatile situation in Afghanistan reminds us of the travails of Malala Yousafzai, that young Nobel Peace Laureate who was a survivor of terrorism imposed by the Taliban and faced death because these radical religious fanatics were against liberating women and girls. She is now an advocate for girls' education. I had the opportunity to meet Malala when she visited Trinidad and Tobago in 2014. I was touched by her humble yet assertive disposition.

Her advocacy for girls' education reminds me of how much we need to be grateful for the gift of education, especially the education and development of women. No doubt, fear and uncertainty have gripped the women of Afghanistan because of the Taliban's opposition to the education of women and girls.

However, despite all the issues of gender-based violence here and in the wider world, we are blessed to witness and experience the progress of women in critical roles in our society. The education of women and girls is a visible example of good stewardship of a republic state.

On another note, I pray that as we prepare for the re-opening of schools this month (God willing), our teachers, parents, guardians, and students will return to a safe and healthy environment – spiritually, emotionally, and physically. In August, I witnessed a mature excitement in our youths to get vaccinated and return to school – the stewardship of youth!

As a Presbyterian community, our history bears witness to the fact that education is one of the building blocks of our foundation. Therefore, we, the members of the Presbyterian Church, are recipients



THE RT. REVEREND JOY ABDUL-MOHAN

of a great and blessed heritage, and the value of what the members of the church have to offer now was never more apparent in these turbulent times.

In this Stewardship month, we are challenged to give more of what we have received from God and from the Presbyterian Church of Trinidad and Tobago – as Church Workers, Elders, Teachers, and members of the wider PCTT.

May God continue to bless and guide us during these unique times that we may become better stewards of God's gifts to us!

Keep safe!



CELEBRATING
national
pride

Independence Day is upon us and in a few weeks, we will celebrate Republic Day.

By the way... what is the difference? Do you know?

Independence Day" refers to the day a country attains freedom from the rule of another country.

Republic Day is the day a country is declared a republic which is a form of government where persons are appointed or elected to official positions, rather than positions being inherited, or passed on from one person to another.

"Republic Day" refers to the day a country is declared a republic, which is a form of government where persons are appointed or elected to official positions, rather than positions being inherited, or passed on from one person to another.

As citizens, we look at freedom from the perspective of the freedom of expression, or freedom from persecution, or even freedom to do as we please. As Christians, however, we look at freedom in the context of the penalty of the sin of Adam, and the freedom obtained at the Cross where the sacrifice of Christ set us free. (Romans 6:23 NIV) "The wage of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

As God used Moses to lead the Hebrew people from slavery in Egypt, God used the sacrifice of Christ on the Cross to release us from bondage to sin and death. While Adam's sin resulted in the

severance of our relationship with God, the sacrifice of Christ on the cross has enabled the restoration of that relationship. We are free from the clutches of the devil!

Our freedom, however, is not to do as we please like the Hebrew people who built and worshipped the golden calf. Our freedom is the freedom from the sins of the flesh so that we may regain a rightful relationship with Christ. The Apostle Paul identifies our freedom as slavery to Christ.

Romans 8:5 (NIV) tells us, "*Those who live according to the flesh have their minds set on what the flesh desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires.*"

This freedom comes through accepting Jesus Christ's death on the Cross as the payment for our sin. Through the acceptance of Christ and the receiving of the Holy Spirit, sin loses its grip on us, and we grow in our relationship with God. This is not the end but just the beginning.

We are not just inheritors of the Kingdom, but we are also called to service in the Kingdom. Ours is not only a hereditary title but also an official position that requires our time, effort and dedication using whatever gifts and talents with which God has blessed us.

Jesus says, "*I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing*" (John 15:5 NIV).

We are inheritors of the Kingdom; we are part of the greater vine and as branches we are called to bear fruit. The bearing of fruit entails participation on our part. We cannot sit on our laurels; we have to use the gifts and talents with which we have been blessed by God to bring others to the same freedom that we have obtained.

As we celebrate Independence Day and Republic Day, let's look at our Kingdom relationship: Do we merely hold the hereditary title of "Child of God", or are we also **active participants** in this part of God's vineyard? Are we being led by the Holy Spirit and are we using the gifts and talents with which God has blessed us to spread the Good News?

"And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father—to him be glory and power for ever and ever!" - Revelation 1:5-6 (NIV) Amen.



BUILD ON A STRONG FOUNDATION

**PCTT BOARD OF WOMEN
Virtual Rally 2021**

**Saturday August 14th
9:00 to 11:00 a.m.**



**INTERN MINISTER CYNARA DUBE-SOOKOO,
RIVERSDALE PASTORAL REGION**

On Saturday, August 14th, 2021, there was a buzz of excitement throughout PCTT as sisters and brothers of the faith attended the PCTT Board of Women's Virtual Rally, 2021. What a glorious morning of worship and fellowship it was!

The Rally's theme was, "**Building On A Strong Foundation.**" The Moderator of Synod, The Rt. Reverend Joy Abdul-Mohan, indicated in her greetings that The PCTT has a strong foundation which was laid by faithful stewards before us. We are now called to continue the task of building which requires commitment, cooperation, and the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Reverend Ria Thompson-Jimdar emphasised in her message that we must build our lives on our Lord, Jesus Christ. This involves both hearing Jesus' words and putting

them into practice.

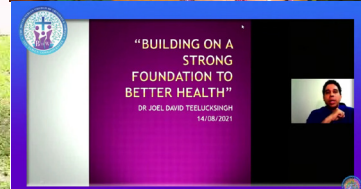
The feature speakers also informed how one can holistically Build on A Strong Foundation in a Pandemic. Dr. Joel Teelucksingh shared from a health perspective, stating that the matriarchs of society are called to respond to chronic illnesses which stem from poor lifestyles. A good diet, like the Mediterranean Diet, and exercise are the cornerstones toward better health.

Furthermore, Mrs. Sabrina Mowlah-Baksh discussed the social perspective, reminding us of our role in social transformation. Throughout history, Christian activists have challenged oppressive practices. Today, following the example of Jesus, we must go beyond charity work and become activists for Christ, which includes petitioning as a community, engaging in peaceful protests, and using our voices for

social reform.

Mrs. Bernadette Gyan-Manickchand and Ms. Stephanie Sam also shared from a mental perspective, highlighting the importance of mindfulness. Experiencing the present moment and engaging in meditative practices such as breathing techniques and prayer can help one cope with stressors during the pandemic.

In addition to being hosted by the dynamic Ms. Petra Mahabalsingh, the Rally was blessed with the beautiful talent of PCTT's youth. This included a dance from Guaico's youth and music from Sanctified Alliance, Emmanuel Presbyterian Church Choir and Zachary Ali of the Marabella/Bonne Aventure Pastoral Region. The PCTT Board of Women thanks all members and volunteers who made this Rally a tremendous blessing to the community.





S.A.T.C. Love Story



ANGELA ARJOON, LA ROMAINE/DEBE PASTORAL REGION

Awedding in these pandemic times is a sign of hope for the future and certainly a celebration of life and love. It says to us that our lives must go on regardless of all the restrictions and negativity.

So when a Naps girl and a Hillview boy met at the St Andrew's Theological College many years ago, a true Presbyterian love story unfolded and led to their marriage.

Intern Minister Bjorn Warde from

the Curepe/St Joseph Pastoral Region now serving in the La Romaine/Debe Pastoral Region and Dr. Cherisse Ratiram from the Oropouche Pastoral Region were married at the S.A.T.C. Chapel recently.

The Minister, Session, and congregations of the La Romaine/Debe Pastoral Region extends congratulations and best wishes to Bjorn and Cherisse for a long life of happiness and bliss and pray God's richest blessings upon the

newlyweds.





KNOW YOUR

FAITH

SERIES



**REVEREND ADRIAN SIEUNARINE, PRINCIPAL,
ST. ANDREW'S THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE**

WHAT WE CAN LEARN FROM JOHN CALVIN ABOUT FAITH & SCIENCE.

Within the Presbyterian tradition, John Calvin explained that the “love for truth” is given by God and creates the desire both for true faith and for accurate scientific endeavour in “investigating truth” for the benefit of all humanity.

Here are some lessons from John Calvin on our attitude to science:

1. “Natural insight is a gift of God, and the liberal arts, and all the sciences by which wisdom is acquired, are gifts of God.” (Commentary on 1st Corinthians).
2. Because the Spirit of God is the fountain of all truth, we should not be antagonistic to truths that surprise us but should welcome them. If we despise them, then we insult God, the giver of all wisdom and knowledge.
3. The writers of the Bible tell us how to go to heaven, not how the heavens go. Using

astronomy as an example of science, he says, “Nevertheless, this study is not to be rejected, nor is this science to be condemned, because some frantic persons are boldly eager to reject whatever is unknown to them.” (Commentary on Genesis).

4. Because God gives us the gift of those whose “work and ministry” have blessed us in “physics, dialectics, mathematics, and other similar sciences, let us avail ourselves of it, lest, by neglecting the gifts of God spontaneously offered to us, we be justly punished for our sloth.”
5. When presented with the latest scientific guidance, we should not “pretend an incapacity to understand” but should accept that knowledge is accommodated to our context and culture. In life, as in Scripture, God accommodates realities to our limited frames of reference.

Therefore, we gratefully welcome God's gifts as we grow in faith and in scientific knowledge to become more than conquerors in Christ.





GENDER JUSTICE

A THEOLOGICAL APPROACH
TO GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Start Date: September 17th 2021

Day: Fridays

Time: 5.30 pm - 8.30 pm

Duration: 12 Weeks

Delivery: Online

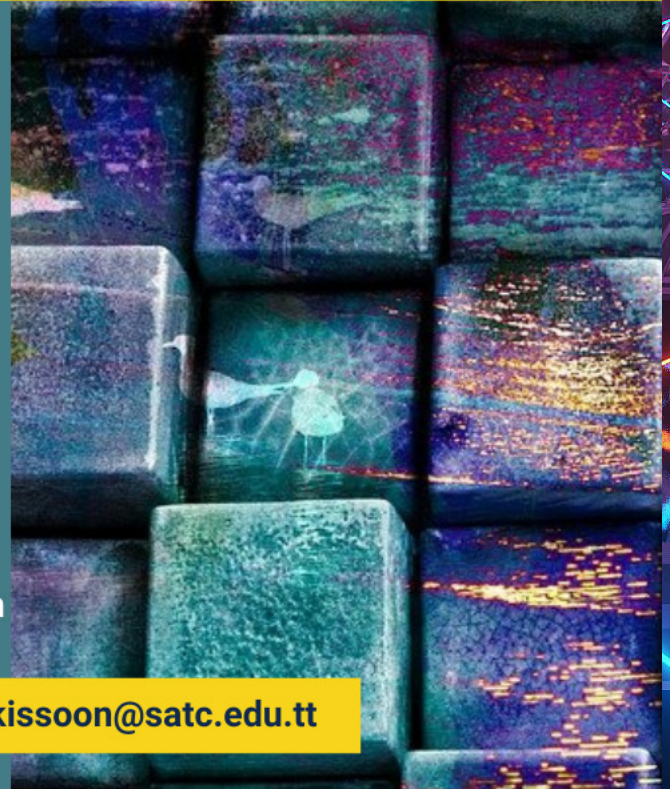
Cost: \$1,500

Coordinated by:

Reverend Sanya Beharry (PCTT)

Members of the World Council of Churches
(WCC): Just Community of Women and Men

Contact us: 1.868.657.7554 | kimberly.ramkissoon@satc.edu.tt





St. Andrew's Theological College

P. O. Box 92, Paradise Hill, San Fernando, Trinidad & Tobago

Academic Year 2021/2022 - Semester I (online)

BASIC CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE

Lecturer: Rev. Damien Sieunarine
Date: Sept 13th - Dec 6th
Day: Monday | Duration: 12 weeks
Time: 5.30pm - 8.30pm
Cost: \$1,500

PASTORAL COUNSELLING I

Lecturer: Rev. Keron Khellawan
Date: Sept 14th - Dec 7th
Day: Tuesday | Duration: 12 weeks
Time: 5.30pm - 8.30pm
Cost: \$1,500

INTRODUCTION TO SOCIOLOGY

Lecturer: Mr. Joseph Bridgewater
Date: Sept 15th - Dec 8th
Day: Wednesday | Duration: 12 weeks
Time: 9am - 12pm
Cost: \$1,500

THE DAWN & DARK AGES: CHURCH HISTORY I

Lecturer: Rev. Adrian Sieunarine
Date: Sept 15th - Dec 8th
Day: Wednesday | Duration: 12 weeks
Time: 5.30pm - 8.30pm
Cost: \$1,500

APOCALYPTIC LITERATURE

Lecturer: Rev. Errol Inshanally
Date: Sept 16th - Dec 9th
Day: Thursday | Duration: 12 weeks
Time: 5.30 pm - 8.30 pm
Cost: \$1,500

GENDER JUSTICE: A THEOLOGICAL APPROACH TO GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Date: Sept 17th - Dec 10th
Day: Friday | Duration: 12 weeks
Time: 5.30 pm - 8.30 pm
Cost: \$1,500

Contact: 1.868.657.7554 | kimberly.ramkissoon@satc.edu.tt

setting goals with our *CHILDREN*



COUNSELLING COLUMN WITH BERNADETTE GYAN-MANICKCHAND





How soon should children begin setting goals?

Parenting in the modern days has become very difficult. Parents' responsibilities do not end just in raising the child, but they also must be the child's guide, mentor, teacher, and friend. Parents also have a role to play in goal setting.

Setting goals gives children a sense of purpose, focuses their limited time and energy on what's really important, and motivates them to achieve something that is meaningful to them.

For children under ten years of age, parents should assist in setting goals as they may be too young to understand the value of this skill in the long run. However, instead of dictating the goals, parents can make it a game/challenge by offering children a reward immediately as the goal is achieved. The sooner the child gets the reward – preferably something of material value/benefit – the better. For instance, rewarding with ice cream or a movie after completing homework or chores.

If the child is above ten years of age, a little more guidance or

nudge in the right direction may be required. The role of a parent in this case is to act as a companion. Sit with your child, ask about his/her ambitions, and do this small activity:

- Speak to your child, giving the following instructions:
- "Close your eyes and focus on your breathing."
- Feel your lungs filling with fresh air and positivity every time you breathe in. Breathe out all your worries and stress."
- Now, ask yourself what you really want to be/do in life."
- "Imagine how it would feel if you achieved your dream. Live that moment in your mind. How does it feel? Do you feel good about it? Excited?"
- "Now, slowly open your eyes as you exhale."
- "Get a pen and paper. Let's list what you need to do to get closer to achieving your dream" (listing goals).

Children of this age expect empathy and compassion. Excite

them about a goal setting plan. Make them see the big picture, and remind them of it when you feel that they're deviating from it.

Parents can set goals for their child without it being seen as an attempt to define the child in any way or impose one's standards on the child. It's just a list of things that come to mind when one asks oneself, "What is my child old enough to do now?"

Today's children are very smart and thoughtful, but they do need some guidance and parents should provide that.

Parents should never force their children to make goals according to their wishes.

Too often we see many parents forcing the children to choose the career that they wanted to pursue. As parents you can discuss with the children their choice and help them understand the pros and cons of their decisions.

Guide, discuss, research, and advise them with a cool mind.



**CRISIS IN THE FAMILY:
ADOLESCENCE [PART 2]**

Adolescence - being neither child nor adult - reminds us of the reference 'being caught between a rock and a hard place,' where situations and circumstances can present difficulties and challenges which may result in conflicts for the adolescent that are linked to crises in the family.

A crisis is not an event, misfortune, or affliction, but a time or duration of time when there are serious difficulties and dangers that require difficult decisions to be taken, which can result in changes for better or worse.

The August thought referenced Erik Erikson's theory on stages of Human and Personality Development which identified 'identity and role confusion' as the crisis that confronts the adolescent. It stays my view that the crisis during adolescence supersedes the crises during any other stage of human development and lifespan and are no less at the present time.

Today, there is much awareness and demands for rights – human rights, children's rights, adolescents' rights, etc. Here the questions are: Do adolescents have rights? What exactly are adolescents' rights? Who determines these rights, the adolescents, or the adults?

A Google search and research indicate that there are no defined or designated adolescent, teen, or youth rights, but the emphasis is more on responsibilities contextualised within the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child [UNCRC 1989], which establishes childhood until 18 years. This falls within accepted adolescent ages of 13-40 (as referenced last month) or 15-24.

The UNCRC, in considering 'all is to be done in the best interest of the child', establishes firstly, that a child has a right to life. The Articles indicate such rights to: a name; an identity; family; opinion; expression; freedom of thought, conscience, and religion; of association; privacy; appropriate information; protection from abuse and neglect, child labour, drug abuse, and sexual exploitation; health care and human services; an adequate standard of living; education; leisure, recreation, and cultural activities; juvenile justice. Since Rights come or are co-joined with responsibilities, adolescent rights begin with the self: The crisis of adolescence 'identity and role confusion.' The dilemma of, "Who am I?"; "What will I be?"

As childhood prepares for adolescence, so too adolescence becomes a platform and foundation

for adulthood. For privileged and sub-privileged adolescents of today, having experienced pre-pandemic and intra-pandemic, what does the post-pandemic era promise? Can the adolescent choose or are choices made for them? Some adolescents quickly adapt. Some are forced to adapt. Others fall through the cracks of family and society. If this is not a crisis, then what is?

Advice such as, "Be true to yourself;" "Friends carry you, but do not bring you back;" "Look before you leap;" "All that glitters is not gold;" "Be the best that you can be;" are all intended to serve as a bridge or rope over a raging or gently flowing river, to enable the adolescent to get across successfully. Know yourself, your resources, your limitations; your social and family's circumstances.

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.

CRISIS IN THE FAMILY - ADOLESCENCE continues in the next issue.

Don't lose faith. Hold strong. Believe, The Family Can.

HAPPY RETIREMENT

Bernadette
Gyan Manickchand

JESSLYN RAMLAL, MORTON MEMORIAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Mother, mother-in-law, daughter, sister, aunt, grandmother, Guidance Counsellor, educator, choir leader and member, elder, Representative from her Pastoral Region on the Synod, Board of Social Responsibility and member of the Communications Committee, dear friend, mentor, cook par excellence, Trinidad Presbyterian columnist – these are some of the hats which Mrs. Bernadette Gyan-Manickchand wears – and now, one of them has been taken off. Just one among the many... for she is one of those persons who, it seems, finds it difficult to do nothing...

The above is a thumbnail sketch of a wonderful and caring individual, who has faced trials that would cause many of us to falter...

In adulthood, Bernadette became a

student again, and graduated with both a Bachelor's and a Master's Degree, and made it seem so easy that those around her began to see even more admirable traits in her than they had seen before. She changed careers in mid-stream, as it were, moving with ease from teaching, and adapting to the new with an air of having always been in the guidance field.

To see Bernadette lead her congregation in 'singspiration' is a thing of beauty. She coaxes and guides and encourages the members to give of their best as they begin to worship. If a jarring note is heard, the teacher in her surfaces, as she reminds them of the need to practice. She leads in worship and preaches with ease and confidence, grounded in God's steadfast love.

It is also a joy to hear her speak of

her fur babies, whom she loves so fiercely. And what an Ajie she is to Haley-Marie and Skylar! To her sons and daughters-in-law, Bernadette could not be a more caring parent. Indeed, family breathes life into her, and she breathes life into her dear family.

So, when we say that Bernadette has 'retired', let us understand that Bernadette may have shed the role of full-time Guidance Counsellor, but all other areas of her life continue to flourish, and indeed, to be blessed by the wealth of experience and knowledge that she has accumulated thus far, in her devout walk along the paths of this life.

May God continue to bless you, dear Bernadette, as you keep growing in His grace in this new phase of your life!

All glory and praise to God!

Faith Through Examinations

The Riversdale Pastoral Region congratulates Miss Jeneal Samaroo on placing 1st and 6th in Additional Mathematics and Mathematics, respectively, throughout the Caribbean at the CSEC 2020 examinations. She shares her faith journey to inspire others who are preparing for examinations in the midst of the pandemic.

Q: How did it feel when you got the good news?

A: When I got the news, I couldn't believe it. I was ecstatic but more so extremely grateful to God firstly, and to my parents, sister, teachers, and friends for helping me achieve this.

Q: What did you do to celebrate despite the pandemic?

A: I relaxed that day; I watched a movie with my sister and had a Zoom night with my friends to

celebrate all our success in our exams.

Q: Are you involved in any activities at your church/region?

A: I am a Sunday School teacher and Youth Group leader.

Q: How did you balance your responsibilities in church and the demands of school/exams?

A: I see my responsibilities in church as my break from my studies, with the added bonuses of spending time with God and doing His work.

Q: How would you describe your relationship with God?

A: I try to ensure that God is my core and foundation in everything. However, I still have so much to learn about and grow with Him.

Q: What role did your faith play as you prepared for your exams?

A: Trusting in God to help and

guide me, that is, to keep His promise that He looks after His people. This kept me at peace and motivated.

Q: What activities did you engage in when things got tough?

A: Talking with God got me through it all. Also, spending time with my family and friends, just for a bit, helped me relax.

Q: What advice would you give to young people as they prepare for their examinations?

A: I would say to keep God at the centre of all you do. Believing in yourself is crucial. Do your best and God will do the rest.

Q: What advice would you give parents or guardians?

A: Being supportive, knowing that you believe in us and reminding us to keep God at the centre, is to me extremely important.



JENEAL SAMAROO, RIVERSDALE PASTORAL REGION



REVEREND DR. RANDALL SAMMAH, MARABELLA/BONNE AVENTURE PASTORAL REGION

*The Reverend
Kendrick Sooknarine
Wake Sermon*

PSALM 31:1-8

I am humbled to have been asked to proclaim God's Word as we give God thanks for the life, witness and ministry of our brother, Rev. Kendrick Sooknarine. He and I have been friends for over 45 years, so I will refer to him as Kendrick.

I was present when the Lord called Kendrick home on the evening of Thursday 12th August, 2021, at about 5:05 p.m., as I was invited to his bedside to say prayers for him. I prefer to say that the Lord called Kendrick home because that is what our faith teaches us.

After being diagnosed with Stage 4 cancer in May, 2021, Kendrick knew that his time on earth was limited. Those of us who met him or spoke to him over the phone can attest that he always displayed a positive attitude. He bravely took his medicines and attended therapy

sessions always with the hope that he will get well. This was not to be.

Assisted by his wife, Anji, Kendrick continued using social media to share God's Word with us. He focused on readings from the Psalms followed by a short discourse. He knew that the Psalms have always been a source of spiritual strength for anyone facing calamity as they offered spiritual strength in times of dread and trouble. Ps. 46:1-2 says, "God is our refuge and strength, a helper in times of trouble." His last sermonette came from Psalm 31: 1-8. As I read this Psalm, I realised that Kendrick was not only preparing himself for what was perhaps inevitable, he was also preparing us.

In our reading, Ps. 31 v. 5 states, "Into your hands I commend my Spirit." These are words that have been put to music. More importantly, however, these words are the ones Jesus used while on the cross, after suffering terribly (Luke 23:46). The Psalms are a powerful way to bring us closer to God and to enable us to receive His presence and power.

The words of Psalm 31 remind us that no matter what our situation is, God remains faithful. We must trust God even when our fears and troubles seem to overwhelm us because God is always present. Our times are in the Hands of God. Kendrick knew this and placed

himself into God's merciful keeping. And while we all hoped and prayed that a miracle of healing would take place, Kendrick's miracle was the Lord calling him home. Now for Kendrick, there is no more sickness.

Despite all pain, distress, sickness and disappointment, Kendrick kept believing. Isaac Watts, the hymn writer, once penned these words in lyrical format, "I'll praise my maker while I have breath."

That was what Kendrick did. Kendrick's deep faith is embedded in the words of Paul to his young friend, Timothy, "The time of my departure is at hand. I have fought the fight. I have finished the race. I have kept the faith." My friends, Kendrick has received his Crown of Righteousness. Praise be to God. Let us continue to proclaim the Lord's death... until He comes again. Amen.

Preached on Saturday 14th August 2021 (via Zoom)

My home church is Morning Star Presbyterian Church (MSPC), "Bhor Ka Tara".

This is one of three churches within the Oropouche Pastoral Region. I was always actively involved in the groups and activities at Morning Star. I was a member of the Local Board; I grew up in Sunday School, was an assistant teacher and then a teacher; I also served in every area of the Youth Group (YG) from President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Worship Leader; was part of the Prayer Group and served on the Building Committee. Regionally, I was an active part of the Oropouche Regional Youth Assembly - ORYA where I served as a Committee Member and MSPC's YG Representative on the Executive, was part of the Regional Development Committee as well as the Regional Sports Committee.

The foundation of my faith was laid by my parents who saw to it that I was brought up to have a relationship with God, and my own experiences with God. God has carried me through many difficult times as well as placed me in a position to be a light to others.

I am blessed with the gift of singing and playing the African Drum both of which I have used to enhance the worship services, not only in my home church but wherever I worship and the opportunity presents itself. I use my voice as well as my drumming to uplift the

worship experience. It is my way of giving glory to God Almighty. I am blessed with the ability to communicate well with persons of various ages and I try to encourage them to also use their talents to God's Glory. I can use this talent in the Pastoral Region to which I am assigned.

I would encourage my congregations, especially the youths, to listen for God's call to serve and to discern the capacity in which they are called to serve. I would tell them of my own 'calling' and upbringing in the church and involvement in the Youth Group as well as my experiences at Youth Camp which shaped my passion to serve.

I would encourage church attendance by relating my sermons to the experiences of my listeners, to what is happening in the community and to today's context. I use the scripture to bridge the gap between the contexts in which it was written and relate it to our lives today. I also do my best to make the connection so my congregation can see the relevance in Scripture.

Some topics may lead to controversy depending on the diverse views of the Minister and some members of the congregation. I would encourage my congregation to see diverse views as being healthy as it gives rise to thought, expressing diverse views and a healthy respect for the views of others. There would be

no shying away from such topics but I would do so in a manner which will show God's love for all mankind. I would seek the Church's perspective on topics which might give rise to diverse views.

Should controversy arise in any of the congregations which I serve, I would reach out to the family or families involved and engage them in dialogue, encourage them to see the validity of the views of others. Sometimes, all they need is a listening ear. This would be done as soon as a problem arises, so the situation can be addressed before it festers, and the church loses members. I will also seek the advice of the previous Minister of that particular Region and other more experienced ministers. I know I have much to learn.

If my youth, both in age and ministry, should pose a problem to any age group in the Pastoral Region to which I have been assigned, I would not alienate them or cast them aside. I would work with them, would get to know what their interests are and reach them through that, I would involve them in activities so designed to get them involved. No one would be cast aside.

I would work to God's glory and encourage them to do the same, showing them that in God's work there is no disunity.



*Intern Minister
Robert Dinnoo*



Congrats Mariah Bhagaloo

NICHELLE BHAGALOO, DIVINE ROCK PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Mariah Bhagaloo graduated from Iere High School, Siparia, where she attained nine CSEC passes and eight CAPE passes. Apart from her academic pursuits, she participated in cricket, volleyball and swimming. She was a member of the 4H, Rotary and Astronomy Clubs. In her spare time she enjoys cooking, sewing and gardening. She was the recipient of the Iere High School Gold Award for the Most Outstanding All-Round Student, 2020. She is the daughter of Lisa and Ramnarine Bhagaloo.

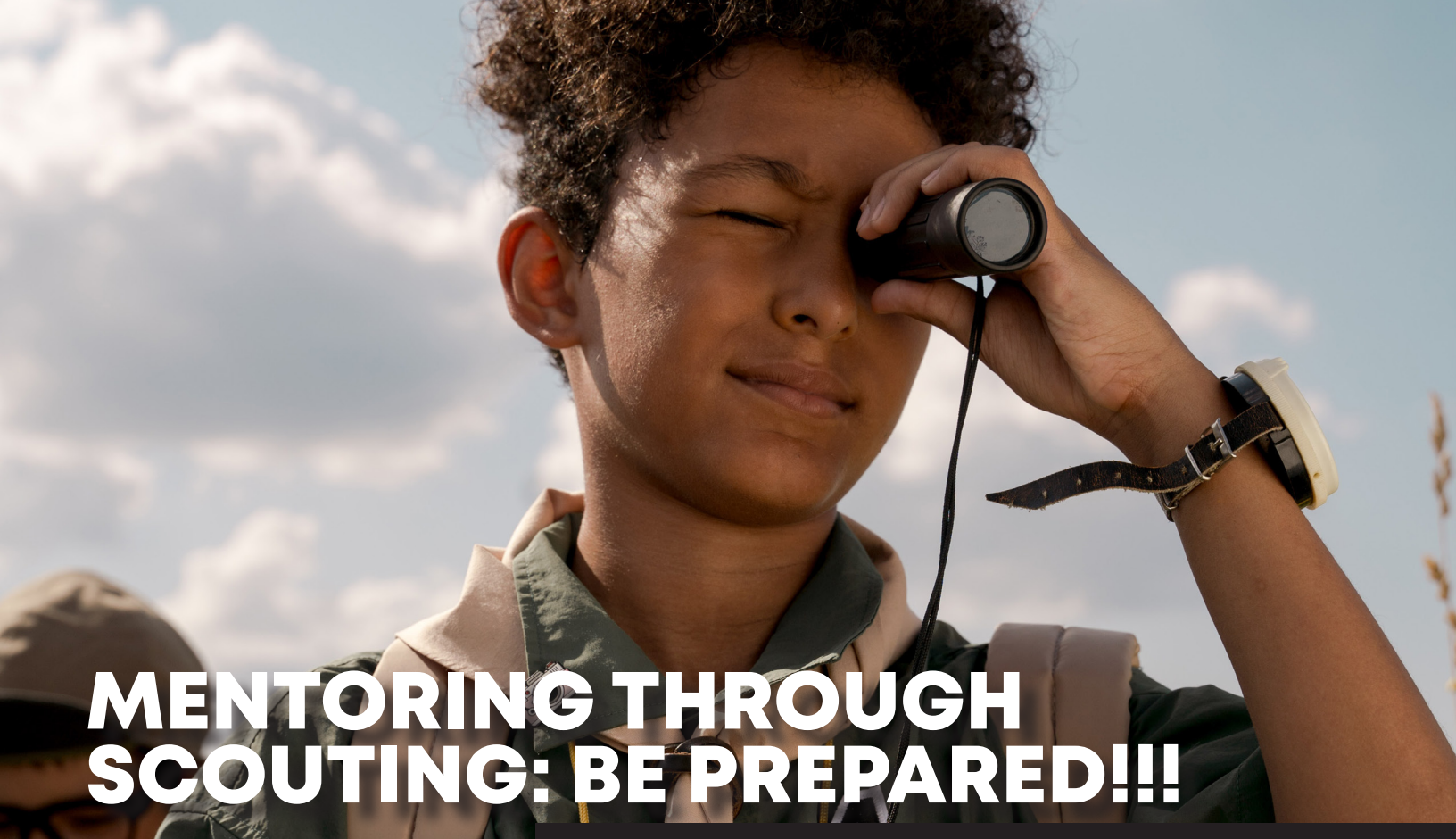
Mariah is a conscientious person

who is determined and perseveres at whatever she sets her mind to accomplish. She attends the Divine Rock Presbyterian Church regularly. She is an active member of the Youth Group and lends her assistance to the Local Board in every way possible.

She stands firm in her belief in Christ and always follows the family's line 'Put God first in all that you do.' Mariah's hard work and dedication have allowed her to receive a National Bursary 2021 to pursue a Bachelor of Medicine, Bachelor of Surgery (M.B.B.S.)

Congratulations Mariah! You have made your family in Christ proud. We wish you success in all your future endeavours.

Mariah's motivational quote is '*God does not give the hardest battles to the toughest soldiers, instead, he creates the toughest soldiers through life's hardest battles.*'



MENTORING THROUGH SCOUTING: BE PREPARED!!!

GARRY SOOMARAH, EMMANUEL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Scouting has played a significant role in the mentoring of young people around the world. The Scout Movement pays it homage to the late Lord Baden Powell who started the Boy Scouts in 1908 in Great Britain. The Scouting Movement was founded in Trinidad and Tobago in 1912 and joined the World Organisation of the Scout Movement in 1963. The Chief Scout of Trinidad and Tobago is the current President, Her Excellency Paula-Mae Weeks, and the National Scout Commissioner is Mr. Mark Ainsley John.

This group is a voluntary non-political educational group. It serves to develop the physical, intellectual, emotional, spiritual, and social potential of individuals. These qualities also aid in developing good citizens who

are proactive in national and community development. Scouting has undoubtedly left its footprints upon the lives of many persons who have contributed positively to the development of our country such as former President Sir Ellis Clarke, Wendell Mottley, Manny Ramjohn and Father Anthony Pantin, the late Archbishop of Port of Spain.

The Scouting Movement within our country has mentored and changed many lives since its existence. Many Scout Leaders will tell you of the changes they have witnessed first-hand, that have occurred because of the boys being exposed to this programme. It shapes their character with respect to always being ready for any situation, which comes from the Scout's Motto "Be Prepared", along with the Scout Laws that they strive to uphold. With such an excellent programme,

many of our primary and secondary schools have programmes which successfully aid in the holistic development of the child.

Being a Scout is a privilege that can be used to re-image and perhaps change the narrative of our society, one Scout member at a time. As a Church, we, too, can use the Scout programme as a form of mentorship that can be used to engage our young people.

In closing, being a Scout is a privilege that can be used to re-image and perhaps change the narrative of our society, one Scout member at a time. Hence as a church, we, too, can use the Scout programme as a form of mentorship that can be used to engage our young people.

Morton Memorial Sunday, 2021



ANTHONY SAMPATH, ARAMALAYA PASTORAL REGION

this compassionate Canadian, who gave up an easy life in Nova Scotia to bring the message of salvation to immigrants in an underdeveloped colony who had already learned to become suspect of their white colonial leaders. Yet, Dr. Morton persevered. He learned their language, he visited them on the estates, and he educated their children. He let the love of Jesus Christ shine through him in word and deed, and because of his efforts and the efforts of missionaries like him, today, the PCTT is firmly established and independent, with over one hundred congregations.

Nevertheless, on Sunday 1st August the cemetery facet of Morton Memorial Sunday 2021 proceeded as customary, albeit on a smaller scale, with the prescribed limit of ten persons in attendance. This year, Reverend Adrian Sieunarine graciously consented to lead the cemetery ceremonies. Also, in attendance was the Member of Parliament for Tunapuna, the Honourable Esmond Forde. Ordinarily, the relatives of the deceased are also invited but because of COVID-19 the above-ground guest list had to be cut

down.

As is customary, in addition to Reverend John Morton, several other former ministers of Aramalaya and the Aramalaya Mission Field were remembered, including Reverend Harvey H. Morton, Reverend John W. McCloud, Reverend Andrew Guyadeen, Rev. Charles D. Lalla, Reverend Everson T. Sieunarine, and Reverend Mary Naimool. At each grave enclosure, memorial thoughts and prayers were raised and floral arrangements placed, with the words "Well done thou good and faithful servant" echoed at each gravesite.

The Morton Family Enclosure in the Streatham Lodge (Tunapuna) Public Cemetery, as well as Morton House on the Aramalaya Church Compound are both listed as national heritage sites on the Heritage Asset Register of the National Trust of Trinidad and Tobago. Both sites are maintained by the Aramalaya congregation. 2022 will mark the 110th Anniversary of the passing of Reverend Morton and, hopefully, a return to normalcy for occasions as Morton Memorial Sunday.

Traditionally, at Aramalaya Presbyterian Church, the first Sunday in August is designated as Morton Memorial Sunday. It was on Sunday 4th August 1912, that the Presbyterian Church of Trinidad and Tobago (PCTT) founding father, Reverend Dr. John Morton, passed away peacefully in the Missionary House (now called Morton House) on the Aramalaya compound. Each year on this anniversary, his life, work, and witness are celebrated and memorialised.

Regrettably this year, because of the suspension of services in church buildings, the congregation at large was not able to honour



At the tomb of Reverend Andrew Guyadeen. Reverend Guyadeen died exactly one week before his dear friend Reverend Morton in the Catechist House on the Aramalaya compound.

Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives Esmond Forde and Reverend Adrian Sieunarine at the gravesite of Reverend Everson T. Sieunarine. Reverend E. T. lies next to his parents and sister.



The Morton Family Enclosure. One of the six spaces in the enclosure was never used.



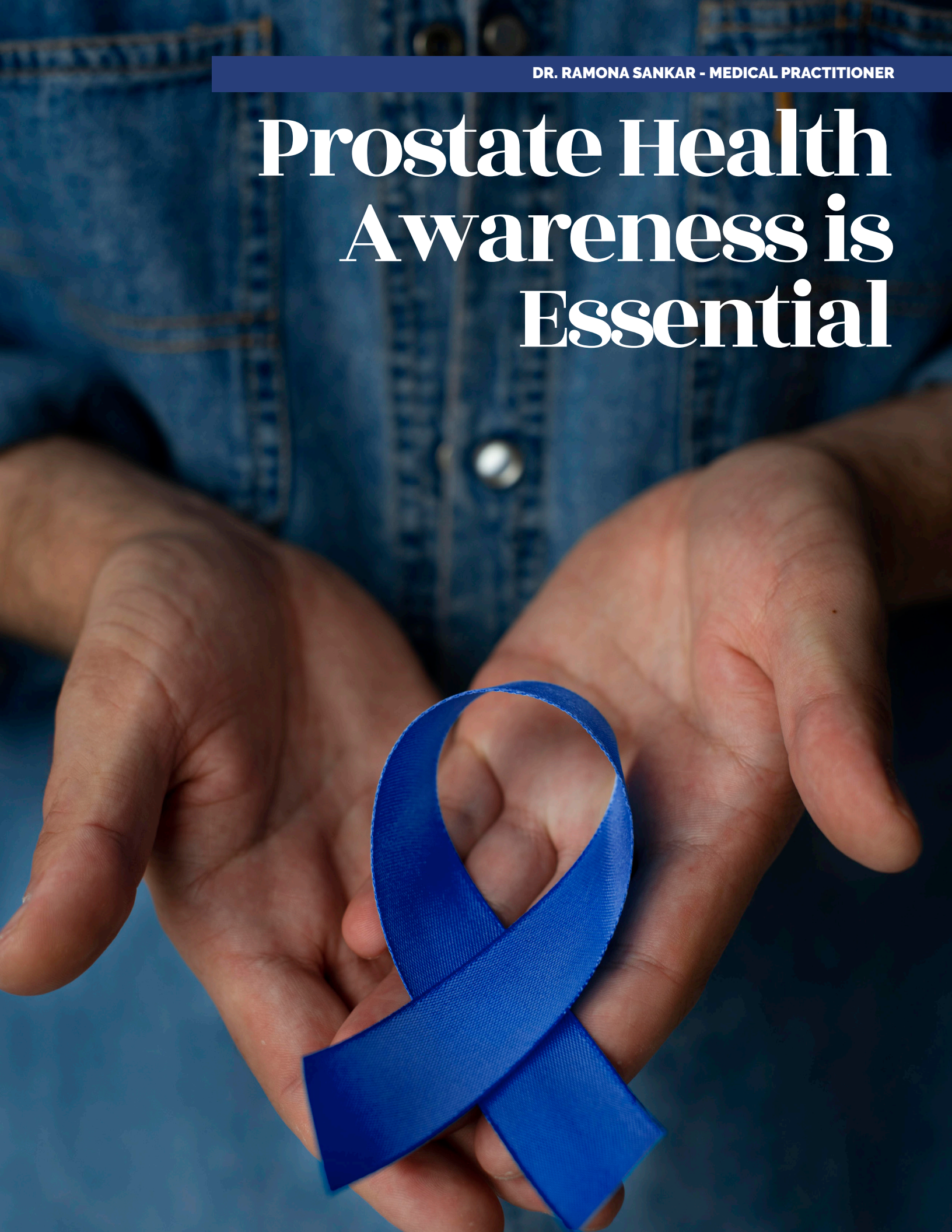
Left to Right - Mr. Sherwin Mohammed (Manager - Aramalaya Presbyterian Church Local Board), Mr. Anthony Sampath (Chairman/Elder-APC Local Board), Reverend Adrian Sieunarine (Principal of SATC), Ms. Susan Durbal (Treasurer/Elder APC Local Board), Dr. Hannah Francis (Elder - Aramalaya), Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives Hon. Esmond Forde, Mr. Arsad Mohammed (Manager - ALB)

The Reverend C.D. Lalla's Tomb lies in the older section of the cemetery.



DR. RAMONA SANKAR - MEDICAL PRACTITIONER

Prostate Health Awareness is Essential



September has been the month designated to raise awareness of prostate health. Prostate-related problems are highly ranked among men of Trinidad and Tobago. The World Cancer Research Fund International states that prostate cancer is the second most common cancer worldwide and the fifth most common cause of cancer deaths among men.

The prostate gland, normally the size of a chestnut is found only in men. This is located under the bladder and functions to make semen. If a man is experiencing the frequent urge or strain to urinate, this is a sign to visit his doctor. The risk of prostate cancer increases with age. Seventy percent (70%) of men over seventy years will likely be affected. Thus, treatment is likely effective once the disease is detected early.

The general practitioner's visit includes a history of focused questions such as history of non-communicable diseases (diabetes), smoking, urinary symptoms (especially at night), family history of prostate cancer, ethnicity, and age (50-70 years). A Digital Rectal Examination (DRE) via the back passage gives the doctor a general

feel of the prostate. A blood test - The Prostate Specific Antigen (PSA) - is essential, as if it shows greater than 4 ng/ml, referral to a Urologist is advised. Further tests may include a urine culture, ultrasound, and a prostate biopsy.

Three problems associated with an elevated PSA are firstly, Benign Prostatic Hyperplasia (BPH) - which in simple terms mean a non-cancerous enlargement of the prostate. This usually occurs after fifty years of age. Secondly, Prostatitis - an inflammation or infection and finally, Prostatic Carcinoma (Cancer). The cancer may occur without one being aware of it. Slowly growing in most cases, but other fast-growing types can spread to other organs.

The Urologist will provide options for treatment such as medication, surgery, or a team-based approach with an Oncologist. Health

recommendations include no smoking, a healthy balanced diet, regular thirty minutes of exercise and stress reduction.

All men should know their status and keep vigilant monitoring. Visit your doctor; speak to your friends, family, and co-workers. Together, we could get prostate-related problems earlier identified and treated. Prostate problems impact on your health, your family, and the economy.



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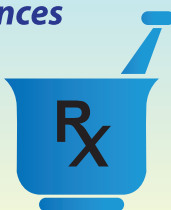
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REMEMBERING THE LIFE
 _____ of _____
 SYLVIA DUKHEDIN-LALLA

Thank you from the Dukhedin-Lalla Family

Grief is the last act of love we have to give to those we loved. Where there is deep grief, there was great love.

The family of Mrs. Sylvia Dukhedin-Lalla would like to thank you very much for your cards, flowers and kind expressions of sympathy shown following her passing.

Your support during this difficult time is very much appreciated and of great comfort to all family members.

"Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand."
 - Isaiah 41:10



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THURSDAYS IN BLACK



TRIBUTE TO SYLVIA DUKHEDIN-LALLA

The deceased, Mrs. Sylvia Dukhedin-Lalla was known as Mother, Ma, Gra Ma, Ms. Doolie, Juley, and Ma Lalla to those who were familiar with her.

She was born on May 22nd 1932 to Rookmin and Ramjewansingh in Sudama Village, Fyzabad, she was called home to the Lord on August 11th 2021. She was the sister of Rosey, Harry, Ruby (deceased) and Doris who is now the only surviving sibling.

Sylvia gained her elementary education at the Siparia Union Presbyterian School. She lived in a time when many girls' education ended early and marriage followed. Sylvia married the handsome Stephen Dukhedin Lalla, the son of Samuel and Dorothy Dukhedin-Lalla (deceased). Sylvia herself was quite a looker. Their marriage saw the birth of five children: Terrance, Jonas, (deceased) Annabell, Rosabell and Daniel. The family became twelve with the marriage of the five children to Myrna, Marina, Basil, (Jennifer and Philip both deceased). The family continued to grow with the birth of four granddaughters: April, Anella, Zoe and Zarah, whom Sylvia loved dearly. Then came the great grandchildren from April and grandson in law Addy, Lee Ann and Adam, the greatest joy of her life.

Sylvia was a devoted member of Akashbani Presbyterian Church

and was one of the founding members of the Presbyterian Church Women's (PCW) group there. She was honoured twice by the congregation; one for her dedication and service as a disciple of Christ and the other as being one of the oldest member of the congregation. She was a faithful disciple of Christ and shared her faith with those who visited her shop. She ensured that her home was a Christian home and that all her children stood on a firm foundation of faith in Jesus Christ. Her faith strengthened her for the many challenges she faced on the journey of life. There was no fund raiser hosted by the congregation of which she was not an active participant. The cooking for many church fund raisers began and ended at Sylvia's home which was referred to as the "Lalla House."

An entrepreneur extraordinaire, master baker and chef, there was no handicraft that Sylvia could not create. She was the village florist and hairdresser. She was also a caterer for christenings, weddings and thanksgiving services. When the birthday of one of the children was being celebrated, all the cousins and village children awaited with excitement to churn the pails of coconut ice cream. No one could make ice cream like her. A glass of ice cream and slice of sponge cake with icing was a birthday treat.

Sylvia was an all-rounder, as we would say, there was nothing she could not do. She even obtained her driver's license. It was fun to see her and Aunty Rosey behind

the steering wheel.

Education was her passion, and in spite of having had to leave school at Standard five, she wanted the best education for her children. Sylvia made every sacrifice needed to ensure that her five children gained a sound education in order to get 'a good job' as she would say. She pushed her children to reach their full potential, and for that we are eternally grateful.

Sylvia believed in discipline; right was right and wrong was wrong, wrong was followed by a good cut tail. She supported the endeavors of her children and always had an encouraging word for each of us. If she felt any of her children were making a mistake, she simply said, "You go burn to learn."

To her children, Sylvia was the best, best, best mother ever! She fulfilled her role as wife and mother par excellence.

Sincerest thanks to the caregivers at Trinity View for the care they gave Sylvia with such love and tenderness.

Sylvia is now reunited with her dearest husband, Stephen, and her son Jonas, as well as with all those who went before her. Sylvia will be missed by her children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, sister, and loved ones.

With faith and conviction in her Lord, she has finished the fight, and a crown of glory is hers.

Till we meet again, Beloved.



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THE BOARD OF MEN OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF TRINIDAD & TOBAGO

59TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

SATURDAY 31ST JULY, 2021 -- 9:00 TO 11:00 A.M.

GUEST SPEAKER: TERRENCE WARDE, GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE SYNOD OF THE PCTT

THEME: Living faithfully in Christ and Building Relationships in an evolving church and community

GARRY SOOMARAH, BOARD OF MEN SECRETARY

The Board of Men held its 59th Whitsuntide Conference on Saturday, 31st July virtually.

The theme chosen was "Living faithfully in Christ and Building Relationships in an Evolving Church and Community". Our Feature Speaker was Mr. Terrence Warde, General Secretary of PCTT. Mr. Warde reminded the Board that its purpose is hinged in the constitution, that states its focus is "to lead men to an understanding of the witness of the Church in the community and in the world". The statement is relevant, since as a Board the way in which we did things pre-pandemic, now require us as a Board to adapt, while continuing the work of the Board of Men.

This year, the Board of Men

selected four members to serve a one-year term on the Board with full membership privileges. The selection of these members was done in accordance with the changes made to the constitution. This meant that persons nominated to serve need not be Elders, but persons of good standing in the Church. The persons thus selected to serve on the Board are: Mr. Robert Sagar, Mr. Robert Seerattan, Mr. Michael Seerattan and Mr. Ken Jaggernauth. The Board extends a warm welcome to these gentlemen.

As the Board forges forward, we were reminded by Mr. Warde about the acronym (AOTS) which means "As One That Serves". Therefore, in keeping with this acronym we have embarked in serving through giving of our time, talent and

perhaps our human and financial resources, based on the needs of the communities that we serve. The Board of Men was reminded by the feature speaker that we should seek partnership among other stakeholders in order to carry out projects where we do not have the human resource to undertake.

As we continue to evolve as a group, we must remember that the relationships that we build will aid in sustaining and developing the Board, so that meaningful contributions can be made not only within the Church, but also the wider communities in which the Church is situated.

Climbing my Second Mountain

KEVIN NEIL RAMKISSOON, MORNING STAR PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



We all strive for that mountain top experience, where it all works out and we achieve everything we set our mind and heart on. In 2019, at 32 years of age, I felt like I was on the top of that mountain. I had the job I always wanted, and I had just bought myself a car. In Church, I was an Elder, Musician, Sunday School teacher and Vice Chair of my Local Board. I felt like I was on top of the world. God was good and I believed I was invincible. It

felt wonderful at the top. It was, but then it all changed.

I got knocked off my mountain and I fell hard. On Easter Sunday 2019, after spending the day on the beach with friends and family, I suffered a massive stroke that left me feeling like a shadow of my former self. This all happened because I was overworked and overburdened, and my body rebelled. As a result, my faith took a huge hit. Now, there I was, lying in the valley on a bed partially

paralysed without a clue about what I was going to do. Everything that formed my identity, every title, everything that made me who I was, was gone.

In the valley, you experience God in a different way. I saw God take a life-threatening sickness and reveal to me the power of Church BEYOND WALLS. I saw people become the hands and feet of Christ. After being on the receiving end of God touching both my family and me through the community of believers, I understood just how powerful the Church can be.

That valley experience changed my life. I'm often asked two questions:

Firstly, "How can God allow this to happen to you, you're so involved in church?" Simply put, I never blamed God for getting sick, I held myself accountable. I wasn't taking care of my temple. I wasn't eating right, and I was doing too much with too little rest. I blame me, but I thanked God throughout this, and strangely enough, for this situation because while testing not only my faith and the faith of many others, I was allowed to experience God in a way I never did before and I thank him for the good that came out of it. There was so much good! People prayed individually and collectively, and they rejoiced with me when prayers were answered, and we continued to pray even harder for those that weren't.

Secondly, I am always asked, "How can you give thanks in something like this?" Simple. The Bible says, "Give thanks in all circumstances;

for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you" (1st Thessalonians 5:18). So, I along with my family and those who held me in prayers, looked at every little blessing as an opportunity to give God thanks. I had a less than 25% survival rate, but I'm ALIVE. There was a point when we weren't sure if I would ever walk again or move my left hand – but we saw the progress. We thanked God when my foot twitched the first time, then, for sitting up, bending my knee and moving my fingers. The prayers were answered! Not how we wanted, but how GOD wanted to answer them, and we thanked God at every step, for every blessing.

During my recovery, I was exposed to a book written by David Brooks entitled, **The Second Mountain: The Quest for a Moral Life**, which compounded my outlook on what Christian life should be. Brooks described life as a "two-mountain climb experience." Your first mountain climb in life is focused inwardly on yourself, focused on your personal goals and objectives. Often, at the top of this mountain, you feel empty, or you get knocked off this mountain into the valley. From the valley you see your much bigger second mountain. This one is outwardly focused, where your accomplishments come from helping others on their own mountain climb. You make an impacting difference in their life.

Looking back at where I was, to where I am today, God moved me from that first mountain where I thought I needed to be, to a second mountain where He needed me

to be. In my professional life, I moved from business employee to business owner in a newfound ministry where I work with small businesses and help them make an impact in the digital world. In my personal life, although I live with post-stroke deficits, I am happier, healthier, and much less stressed.

Friends, this is my story of how my faith was tested and it is my hope that it helps strengthen yours. I close with these 3 points.

1. God answers prayers. I am alive not because of my own prayers because I was not properly conscious and couldn't pray for my own self, but through the prayers and faith of my family, friends and the wider Church. God answers prayers.
2. Miracles are not just Bible stories. We are still living in the age of Miracles, even in a pandemic.
3. Most importantly, do not limit what you think God can or cannot do.

God used a valley to bless me "exceedingly and abundantly more than I deserve" (Ephesians 3:20-21). I am not anyone special – no more special than anyone reading this. God sent His Son to die for all of us, not just for some of us. I know, if God can do it for me, He can and do it for all of us, as is His will. I am now climbing my second mountain, all thanks to God.



Growing in Giving

REVEREND DR. RANDALL SAMMAH, BOARD OF STEWARDSHIP & FINANCE

The Theme for Stewardship Month for the year 2021, is **GROWING IN GIVING**. We must first recognise that the God we worship is a giving God. John 3:16 tells us that the reason God gave His Son is because God loved the world and everything in it. After all, the world was created by God. God created the heavens and the earth. Psalm 24:1 clearly says, "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof..."

We understand then, that it is in the nature of God to give. In Isaiah 9:6, we read that a "child is born and a son is given." Philippians 4:19 is one of the many scriptural examples

we have, that points to the nature of God's giving, "And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus."

In this time of pandemic, businesses have been decimated and many have lost their jobs. Churches have been closed for extended periods on two occasions. The participation of Church members has been stymied as a result. There is no worshipping together as the Body of Christ. The work of Church groups, Church Courts and Synod's Boards and Committees has also been hampered.

In times of crisis, the faith of

believers is severely affected. It is easy for persons to slip into survival mode and withdraw from supporting the work of the Church. This is understandable.

There are two main objectives in preparing these theological reflections. Firstly, to remind members that God continues to provide for us. God's providence takes place in the context of a relationship with Him and is meant to serve as a reminder of His presence. Secondly, because of this relationship, we are called to remain committed to building God's Kingdom using our time, talents, and treasures.

There are four sub-themes, one for each Sunday in the month of September:

5th September: GROWING IN GRATITUDE

12th September: GROWING IN FAITHFULNESS

19th September: GROWING IN DISCIPLESHIP

26th September: GROWING IN MISSION

These Theological Reflections (and not sermon outlines) have been prepared with the preacher in mind. They are designed to stimulate thought. The preacher is invited to use the ideas presented and "tweak" them into a sermon that is relevant to his/her context and audience, using his/her own experience. No Scripture suggestions are provided. This

is intentional. Our preachers can have the "homiletical freedom" to blend their theological, preaching and pastoral experience in order to make the sermon relevant to the needs of the congregation.

God bless everyone.

GROWING IN GRATITUDE

The question every Christian must ask himself/herself is, "What has God done for me in Jesus Christ?" It is a question that goes with us throughout our lifetime.

To answer a question of this kind requires an acknowledgement of two realities. Firstly, the individual has a relationship with Jesus Christ. Secondly, this relationship should evoke feelings of gratitude and thanksgiving.

Gratitude requires us moving from being tight-fisted with what we have (however little it may be) to a position of being able to recognise areas of need and opportunities to share.

Psychologists have identified that the happiest people are generous people, and the most generous people are those who are deeply thankful and recognise that God is the source of all blessings, the giver of all "good and perfect gifts." Additionally, research done by neuroscientists indicates that gratitude is beneficial for our physical health, including our heart, our mental outlook and even when we are struggling with various illnesses. Spiritually, we become more loving and compassionate.

This is good news for us living with selfish individuals, including ourselves.

One theologian, Diana Butler Bass, in her book, *Grateful*, has pointed out that gratitude has a spiritual dimension. Gratitude is made manifest in our lives when we realise our efforts, that sharing must not be born out of guilt but as a response to God's love for us in Jesus. How do we respond to God's gift of love? Stewardship is about acting out our attitude of gratitude. Let us Praise God from whom all blessings flow!

Western culture has shaped us to become everlasting consumers, we often buy things that we really don't need. Such is the power of advertising. While we may have "buying power", we also must realise that having too much can deprive another person of basic essentials. One characteristic of gratitude is to be satisfied with what we have. Gratitude needs to be inculcated in the lives of our children and young people and become an intentional practice for all of us. As Christians, we must realise that our lives are sustained by the goodness and grace of God and not on how much we possess. The hymn writer provokes us to: "Now Thank we all our God,/ with heart and soul and voices,/ who wondrous things has done,/ in whom this world rejoices."

The example of Jesus blessing the five loaves and two fish (Matt 14:13-21) teaches us that when we

bles, that is, give thanks for what God has provided, there is always enough to go around. The breaking of bread and sharing of wine at Communion are reminders of what God has done for us in Jesus Christ. God's grace is always sufficient for us (2nd Cor. 12:19).

GROWING IN FAITHFULNESS

There is a Faith dimension to gratitude, "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35). For us, as Christians, we must consider how we respond to God's generous love for us in a caring, responsible way, taking into consideration our calling to be stewards. Unfortunately, for many, faith is a personal, private affair and we miss out on the sharing and mutual nature of our faith. There is a "koinonia" aspect to our faith. John Westerhoff III, a theologian, has observed that we are not Christians alone. We are Christians in community.

Faith must go beyond an emotional high. Faith must re-orient us to a new way of thinking and doing. In Romans 12:2, Paul admonishes us, "not to conform to the pattern of this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind." To grow in faith and faithfulness requires that we leave behind the old ideas of a private faith. To renew our minds means we have to begin to appreciate that we are our "brother's/sister's keeper."

Someone has observed that

the steward is like a pilot. The pilot must stick to a designated flight plan in order to arrive at the desired destination. Similarly, we must continually examine the course our life is taking to ensure we are heading in the right direction according to God's will. The steward uses all the resources: time, talents and treasure, in order to bring glory to his name. What God has blessed us with must never be used for selfish personal gain.

James 2:26 teaches that faith without works is dead. Our pattern of living must reflect the faith we believe in. Some positive traits of the faithful steward include self-control (II Cor. 13:5) and accountability. How do we use what God has given us responsibly for (1st. Cor. 4:2)? In the same way, we are stewards of everything we have been given, including our time, money, abilities, information, wisdom, relationships, and authority. And we will all give account to the rightful owner (God) as to how well we managed the things he has entrusted to us (Parable of the Talents, Matthew 25:24-30).

We must also show a repentant spirit. Have we been good managers of all that God has given to us: our time, our finances, our family life, the quality of our leadership, etc.? Let us do what we can so that we can hear God saying to us, "Well done, good and faithful servant."

GROWING IN DISCIPLESHIP

The person of faith is inclined to live a life of discipleship. This is a teaching of which we must constantly remind ourselves. Unfortunately, we easily get caught up in the trappings of Church membership. While Church administration requires us to "do things decently and in order" (1st Cor. 14:40), we can easily lose sight of the call to discipleship. Discipleship can be defined as responding to God's call, professing faith in the saving grace of Jesus Christ, and committing oneself to bear witness to Him. Simply put, we must love God and love neighbour.

To live as a disciple of Christ, we must imitate Christ (Thomas a Kempis – *The Imitation of Christ* and be willing to practice the requirements of Christian Stewardship. In Matthew 16:16-19, Jesus commands us "to go and make disciples of all nations." This is known as The Great Commission.

We are called to be "intentional" disciples and just not in name only. This suggests that we be aware that we must glorify God in all that we do by bearing much fruit (John 15:8). How do we seek first the Kingdom of God (Matt, 6:33)? Discipleship, then, is a way of life.

We can link stewardship and discipleship by recognising that God's gifts to us and the Church are for spreading the good news of the Gospel using the gifts we have received. 1st Peter 4:10

instructs, "Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms." Like Saul (Paul) on the way to Damascus, we must all experience an inner conversion. Conversion is committing our lives to the Lord. A Catholic theologian has defined Stewardship as an expression of Discipleship in which we understand how we must live out our lives.

In his masterpiece book, *The Cost of Discipleship*, Dietrich Bonhoeffer stresses that the mature disciple makes a conscious decision to be a follower of Christ. "When Christ calls a person, He bids them to come and die" (with Him). Are we willing to go where Jesus leads us? Therefore, the disciple who practices stewardship recognises that all good gifts come from above (Ps. 24:1). The gifts we have received are not meant for ourselves, they are meant to be shared to benefit all creation, including humankind. Simply put, Discipleship and Stewardship are key ingredients of the Christian life.

Jesus not only calls people to him but equips them and sends them out into the world for service (see Baptism and Confirmation vows).

GROWING IN MISSION

In Luke 4:16-18, Jesus reads from the prophet Isaiah, "*The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, for He has anointed me to preach the Good News to*

the poor..." Theologians agree that Jesus is explaining to his listeners what His mandate, His mission is. This declaration also signals the beginning of His ministry. Have we ever given thought to what the mission of the Church is? What about our own mission as disciples of Jesus Christ? What is God calling us to do individually and collectively?

In teaching His disciples to pray, Jesus petitioned, "Thy Kingdom Come..." (Matt 6:9-13; Luke 11:2-4). Simply put Jesus' ministry was to "realize" the Kingdom of God on earth. This is referred to as *Missio Dei* (The Mission of God).

The mission of God covers several aspects of Christian living: reconciliation, peace-making, justice, taking care of creation, and God's Shalom. "Shalom" is a Hebrew word meaning peace, harmony, wholeness, completeness, prosperity, welfare for all and tranquillity. As disciples, we align ourselves to what God is doing in the world. As stewards, we are called to make responsible use of the resources God has entrusted to us to serve God's mission on earth. Thus, in order to be faithful disciples, we are called to practice faithful stewardship. Stewardship is both an invitation and a faithful response to God's mission – participating in building the Kingdom of God.

For us to be faithful stewards, personal transformation is necessary. We must move beyond

our personal needs, wants, and political agendas to "make all things new" (Rev. 21:5). The message of the Church is to preach that there are sufficient resources to share all around.

There must be no such thing as a selfish Christian or Church. To actively engage in God's mission, three steps are necessary:

Firstly, **repentance and reconciliation**. We must first realise that some of our behaviours have not been in alignment with God's Shalom. We must repent for this and intentionally change our life patterns.

Secondly, as Paul suggests, we need to be **transformed by the renewal of our minds** (Romans 12:2). We need to educate ourselves with what are God's priorities for the world, and develop lifestyles that reflect the values of the Kingdom of God.

Thirdly, we must **empower ourselves and others to make a change**. Social Transformation encourages us not to "give a man a fish to feed him for a day", but rather to, "to teach him how to fish in order to feed him for a lifetime." The mission field of the congregation is the community around the Church. If we seek out, we will find many opportunities to build the Kingdom of God.



Church Update Forms

GARY SAMAI, GENERAL SECRETARY, PSSBOE



The Presbyterian Secondary Schools' Board of Education has been inundated with requests to provide information regarding the importance of completing the various Church Update Forms that are found on the official website. These important documents are official requirements when applying for Teaching or Promotion positions, or even for the simple purpose of maintaining an official record for future use.

Official Church Update Forms include:

- New Applicant (Two-Year) Update
- Six-Month Church Update
- Promotion Principal/Vice Principal (Fifteen-Year) Update
- Promotion Dean/Head of Department (Eight-Year) Update
- Transfers (Two-Year) Update

This article specifically focuses on the Six-Month Church Update Form, as it is the least received document by the Board. All Presbyterian Secondary School teachers must ensure that these forms are completed twice per year through their respective church's Local Board and Pastoral Region's Session. Once completed, they are stamped and signed by all relevant stakeholders, including the teacher, before being forwarded to the Presbyterian Secondary Schools' Board of Education via soft or hard

copies, where they are kept on file for reference, analysis and adjudication.

This critical form also allows the Board to strategically note the involvement and activeness of its Presbyterian personnel, in preparation for future promotion appointments and for succession planning activities. It is a continuous record of the teachers' dedication to the life of the Church and also facilitates identification of those who may need encouragement in improving their faithfulness through active involvement and attendance.

Although physical churches have been closed due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, the teacher should ensure that these forms are completed and submitted on their behalf. The Local Boards and Sessions are free to note the virtual attendance of teachers to online services and activities, as well as their activeness through participation in various planned outreach missions, technical involvements, church fundraiser activities and even offering submissions, to name a few.

We hope that this information is useful and that it is communicated extensively. Please feel free to visit our website (<https://www.pssboe.com/>), or call (1-868-749-5851) for further information, at your convenience.



THE THREE



THE PCTT CARES,
PLEASE REMEMBER THESE

CORONA VIRUS

PREVENTIONS

“Dear friend, I pray that you may enjoy good health and that all may go well with you, even as your soul is getting along well.”

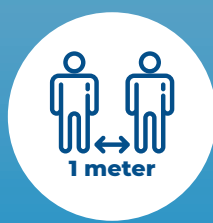
- 3 John 1:2



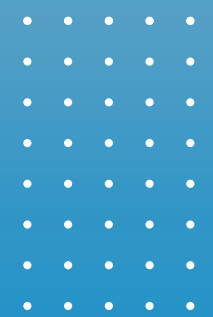
Wear a face mask properly



Wash your hands often



Watch your distance



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VIRTUAL GENERAL YOUTH CAMP 2021

STEPHEN KASERAM, VICE-CHAIRMAN OF B.O.Y.A

It was evident in just under one week, that all it took was a spark to trigger hope and inspiration in the participants of BOYA Virtual Camp, 2021, held from the 8th to the 13th of August.

Some of the consequences of COVID-19 are doubt, fear, anxiety, stress, and depression among many young persons. With approximately 140 campers registered, the BOYA Virtual General Camp 2021 was geared towards uplifting youths, reminding them that God is our high hill and fortress, and that He will never leave us nor forsake us, especially in these challenging times.

The theme for this year's camp was 'SECURE'; to reassure youths that to be secure in Christ is to be safe from the effects of harm or attack, and was based on the scripture verses, selected from Psalm 40: 1-3. The verses illustrate the power of Almighty God, even when we are lonely or down, knowing that He is here to lift us up and secure His chosen generation.

The objectives for Virtual General Camp 2021 were:

- To nurture inner spiritual life and reinforce practical behaviour for Global impact.
- To understand a leader's role in God's goal for the fulfilment of the Great Commission.
- To better develop friendships with one another and to strengthen the spiritual relationship with God.
- To understand and apply the principles and practices of Church planting movements.
- To continue to share and serve God through our talents and skills.
- To create and implement a balanced, biblical, reproducible ministry plan

During the week, campers were also able to praise and glorify God by engaging in activities to comprehend His eternal love that saved us from sin. Since the chief end of Presbyterians is to glorify Christ and enjoy Him forever, campers were reminded of salvation that He has given them

so that they can fulfil His purpose. Campers were also encouraged to unwrap the present that reveals God's ultimate gift of the Holy Spirit, who secures us with the equipment to face each day.

The Board of Youth Affairs extends gratitude to God for granting us the faith and patience, the Camp Committee, comprising Reverends, Deaconesses, Student Ministers, Intern Ministers, as well as the Regional Youth Coordinators, and other committed Church Workers for their hard work and dedication, and the National Youth Coordinator for her wide knowledge and expertise in making the Virtual General Camp 2021 a success. This dedicated and enthusiastic team proved to be inspired as the Camp was a beacon of encouragement during uncertain times.

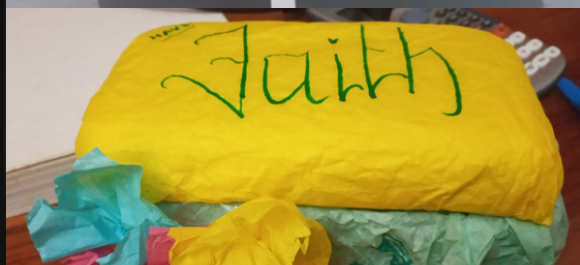
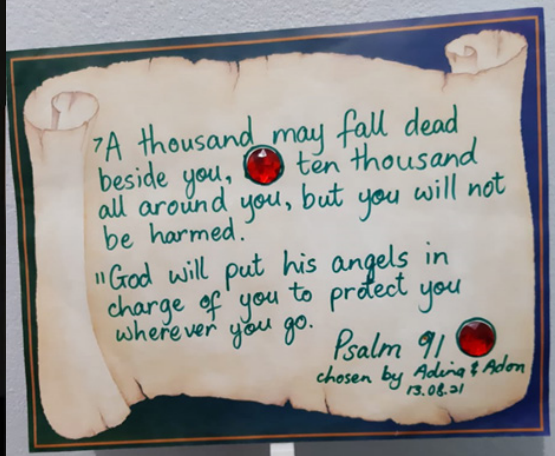
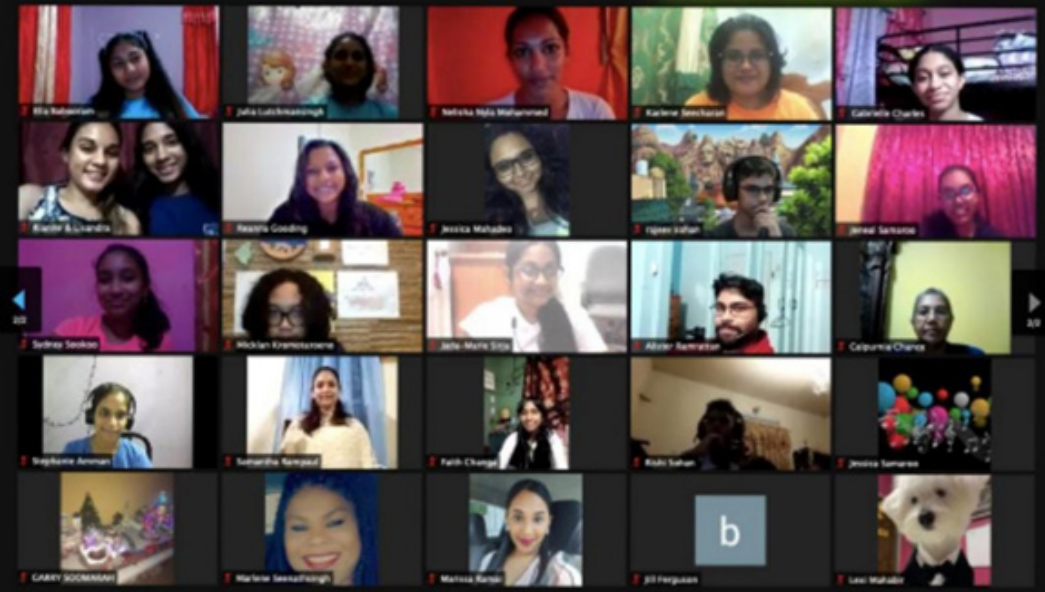
May God bless us all!





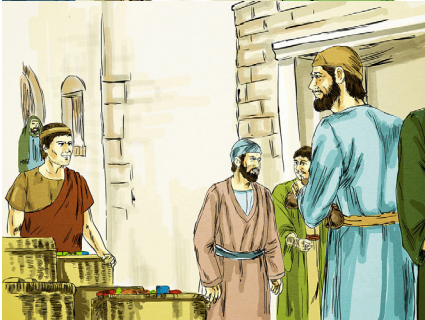
BOYA/NYC CAMP 2021

S.E.C.U.R.E



Becoming Good Stewards

DEACONESS AMBER SEESAHAJ-PAYNE, CLAXTON BAY PASTORAL REGION



BIBLE STORY

Matthew 25:14-29 -
Parable of the Talents

Jesus told a story about three servants.

Once, there was a man who was getting ready for a trip. As he prepared to leave, he called three of his servants to him. The man owned a lot of property and he wanted to put these servants in charge of all that he owned while he was away. To the first servant he gave 5 talents. In those days, a talent was a coin that was worth more than \$1000! The man gave 2 talents to the second servant, and the last servant got 1 talent. Then, the man headed out on his journey. The servant with 5 talents used it to make 5 more talents. Now he had 10 talents! The man with 2 talents did the same and ended up with 4 talents. But the man with one talent dug a hole and hid it in the ground. After a while, the master did return and he told the servants to bring his money back. The servant with the 10 talents came to him and said, "Master, you gave me 5 talents, look! I have used them to gain 5 more."

The master was very pleased with him and said, "Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been

faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things."

Then the second servant came and presented the master with his 4 talents. The master said to him, "Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things."

Lastly, the third servant came before the master and said, "Master, I know that you are a hard man. You harvest where you have not sown and you gather where you have not scattered seed. So I was afraid and hid your money in the ground. Here is the 1 talent that you gave to me."

The master was very angry that the servant had not been wise with what he had given him. So the master took away the talent and gave it to the servant that had 10. Then he said, "Everyone who has will be given more, and he will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him."

MESSAGE

STEWARDSHIP! This is a big word that means a person is the manager of something important. As God's children, we are stewards because God has blessed us with many talents and resources and we are to manage and be responsible for that

MEMORY VERSE

- "The Earth is the Lord's and everything in it."
You see, God owns everything.
- Psalm 24:1

The Parable of the Talents



which God has given. In our story, the master represents God. We are the servants. God has given all of us money and possessions to use to build His Kingdom.

Everything that we have God has given it to us, our money, clothes, houses, toys, possessions, talents, time - everything! All of our belongings are actually GOD'S! To be a good steward, we must take care of everything God has given us.

We are to care for our creation! God created this Earth for us and filled it with plants and animals, we must look after the beautiful nature God made. We are to also look after one another as we are also God's creation.

Just like the servants in our Bible Story, God has given us all different amounts of time, money, talent, and ability. We have to remember that ALL of these are HIS. He just gives them to us to use while we are here on Earth.

The stewards had a responsibility to be wise with the owner's money. That's why those who invested the money wisely were praised while the one who just buried it and didn't use it wisely was told off. He didn't handle his responsibility well.

God has given each of us a certain amount of money, time, and talent. If we waste it, we are not being good stewards. We are to be responsible and use what God has given us to build the Kingdom of God, sharing and helping with others and then we will be good stewards!

But the man who had received the one talent went off, dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money. Matthew 25:18

Each number represents a letter of the alphabet. Substitute the correct letter for the numbers to reveal the coded words.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
R	N	J	Z	M	C	W	L	O	K	Q	S	I	T	D	F	E	P	U	V	H	X	G	Y	A	B

- 12-21-25-1-17 _____
- 16-25-13-14-21-16-19-8 _____
- 21-13-15-17 _____
- 5-9-2-17-24 _____
- 23-9-9-15 _____
- 12-17-1-20-25-2-14 _____
- 3-9-19-1-2-17-24 _____
- 25-16-1-25-13-15 _____
- 8-25-4-24 _____
- 21-25-18-18-13-2-17-12-12 _____

FAITHFUL	GOOD	HAPPINESS	SHARE	AFRAID
LAZY	JOURNEY	SERVANT	MONEY	HIDE



Bible Pathway Adventures

WORD SEARCH

PARABLE OF THE TALENTS

B S A S H M A S T E R F K N L F M E P Y
 H S B H H Z U R E A P I N G W H U E R V
 A D U Z L A E Z L D V U F I L R A I O W
 D N N R X H X L C B U L V A D D P W P L
 R M D T K X H D H N V A N J V I S R E M
 H D A S A O X S H V A R X H Y S E K R H
 Q Y N F S L B U J N L H S Y J C R E T P
 F T C L O Z E S W W U N O J H I V W Y T
 A R E D W Q L N W Y A A L Z L P A G M O
 I C J U I S W X T R B H I J B L N B H R
 T J F D N K E W X S L B B S V E T W W A
 H I F Q G X T B E V E M V O T S S P R H
 F V Q X R I S Q H E Y D G N Z G K W U T
 U L I K L W X S Q O P O N B Y X M T W E
 L N Z Q P L K Z H P M I Z K T O O L S A
 D T R U S T W O R T H Y N X S G N W Y C
 I L G R O U N D T W L E H G M M E P R H
 Q I M C M F L W K V Y E S H U A Y X A E
 X G E D A R K N E S S N B W Q V R O Q R
 T K P A R A B L E D F O S X I O U R K Q

- | | | |
|---------------|-------------|-----------|
| VALUABLE | DARKNESS | PARABLE |
| TORAH TEACHER | GROUND | SOWING |
| YESHUA | FAITHFUL | MONEY |
| PROPERTY | SERVANTS | MASTER |
| TALENTS | WEEPING | REAPING |
| ABUNDANCE | TRUSTWORTHY | DISCIPLES |

Write a poem about the parable of the talents.

If this parable was a book, the cover would look like this.

This parable teaches me...

If you were suddenly given five talents, what would you do?





THE PCTT CARES

As a community of believers, we need to demonstrate love for our neighbour. (Matthew 22:39)

The Presbyterian Church of Trinidad and Tobago (PCTT) affirms the Greatest Commandment of Christ, our Lord - to love one another as God loves each one and to love neighbour as self.

Although a personal choice, the PCTT cares that you protect yourself, your loved ones and your neighbour from COVID-19 by getting vaccinated guided by sound medical advice. **COVID-19 kept us apart but vaccines can bring us back together.** Make the responsible choice! Be safe and God bless!

IN LOVING MEMORY

*Fay Ramsaran
Rambharose*

GONE BUT NOT FORGOTTEN

by her parents: Raymond and Annabella Ramsaran

Sisters: Jacqueline and Natasha

Nephews: Christopher and Nicholas

Brothers in law: Venoo and Khairon

Her many relatives and friends

Former member of the Knox Presbyterian Church

"To live in the hearts of those you loved is not to die".



SUNSET: 03-09-2018

Rheia Heeralal

GONE BUT NOT FORGOTTEN

Cunupia Presbyterian Church

Lovingly remembered by her beloved parents Mr. Ramdeo Heeralal (deceased) and Mrs. Nardaroon Heeralal and her dear sister Ms. Rheisa Heeralal. May her soul rest in peace.

SUNRISE: 27-06-91

SUNSET: 11-08-15


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*DISCLAIMER: The Editorial Committee may not agree
with the views expressed by the writers.*

Dear Readers please email ALL article submissions to this address ONLY.

TrinidadPresbyterian@pctt.org.tt

Please keep all article contributions between 300 - 350 words.

Please send all articles by the 15th of each month.

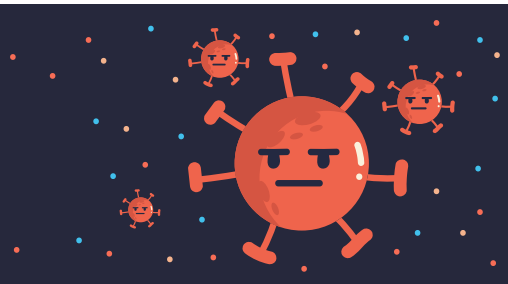
Kindly note that articles sent after the 15th will NOT be acknowledged for the upcoming publication, but may be considered for future issues.

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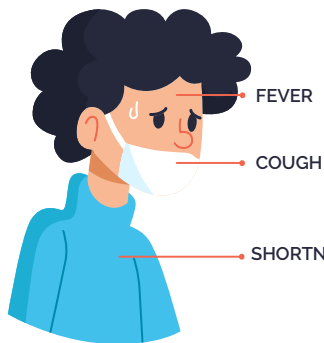
nCoVid-19

NOVEL CORONAVIRUS 2019

Help us beat the virus' spread. Keep practicing these for the prevention of the virus's impact for everyone



MOST COMMON SYMPTOMS



38°

FEVER

COUGH

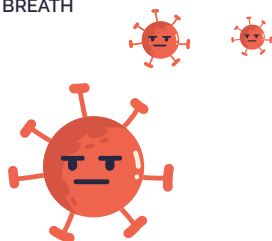
SHORTNESS OF BREATH

OTHER

- DIARRHEA
- VOMITTING

ADVANCED CASES

- PNEUMONIA
- RENAL FAILURE



TRANSMISSION

- AIR-BORNE DROPLETS
- CONTAMINATED OBJECTS
- ANIMALS
- HUMAN DROPETS

PREVENTION



WEAR A MASK WHEN YOU GO OUT IN PUBLIC



KEEP YOUR DISTANCE FROM OTHERS (6 FEET)



COUGH INTO A TISSUE OR INTO THE CROOK OF YOUR ELBOW



STAY AT HOME AND REST IF YOU ARE ILL



AVOID TOUCHING YOUR OR ANYONE'S FACE



WASH YOUR HANDS OFTEN WITH SOAP AND WATER OR USE AN ALCOHOL-BASED HAND SANITIZER



CLEAN THEN SANITIZE SURFACES (E.G. TABLE TOPS, DOOR KNOBS AND CELL PHONES)

(SOURCE: MINISTRY OF HEALTH, TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO)

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE & ABUSE HELPLINES



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Rape Crisis Society North Office: 627-7273

Rape Crisis Society South Office: 657-5355

Families in Action: 628-2333 / 622-6952

National Help Line: 800-4357

Rainbow Chat: 321-3393

Lifeline: 645-2800/622-6952



Read
Your Bible

September
2021

Growing is Giving

SUNDAY		<i>James 2:1-17</i>	<i>James 3:1-12</i>	<i>John 3:13-17</i>	<i>James 3:13 - 4:3, 7-8a</i>
MONDAY		<i>Philippians 1:1-11</i>	<i>Matthew 4:1-11</i>	<i>2 Kings 5:1-19</i>	<i>Matthew 6:25-34</i>
TUESDAY		<i>Philippians 1:12-30</i>	<i>Matthew 4:12-17</i>	<i>2 Kings 5:19-27</i>	<i>Matthew 7:1-12</i>
WEDNESDAY	<i>Psalms 96</i>	<i>Philippians 2:1-11</i>	<i>Matthew 4:18-25</i>	<i>2 Kings 6:1-23</i>	<i>Matthew 7:13-21</i>
THURSDAY	<i>1 Kings 11:1-13</i>	<i>Philippians 2:12-30</i>	<i>Matthew 5:1-10</i>	<i>2 Kings 9:1-16</i>	<i>Matthew 7:22-29</i>
FRIDAY	<i>1 Kings 11:26-43</i>	<i>Philippians 3:1-16</i>	<i>Matthew 5:11-16</i>	<i>2 Kings 9:17-37</i>	
SATURDAY	<i>1 Kings 12:1-20</i>	<i>Philippians 3:17-4:7</i>	<i>Matthew 5:17-20</i>	<i>2 Kings 11:1-20a</i>	