



## A COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR OF PEC - EWI PROVINCE

# The Information

"I must turn aside and look at this great sight..." When the Lord saw that he had turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, "Moses, Moses" And he said, "Here I am."  
Exodus 3 vs 3-4 (NRSV)

December, 2020



**Rev. Algernon Lewis**  
**Chairman of PEC**

### In the Neighbourhood

*The Word became flesh and blood, and moved into the neighborhood. We saw the glory with our own eyes, the one-of-a-kind glory, like Father, like Son, Generous inside and out, true from start to finish (John 1:14 MSG).*

The biblical language scholars are usually troubled by the Message version of the Bible. However, it shines a ready light on Scripture as it is read, in better ways than other versions. Case in point of John 1:14 a – the Word became flesh and blood, and moved into the neighbourhood. That is an aha moment. John makes it clear in this text that Jesus did not just come to the world or dwell or live among us. Jesus moved into the neighbourhood, into *my* neighbourhood. This gives new potency to the concept of Immanuel (Isaiah 7:14, Matthew 1:23) which means God with us. Jesus moving into the neighbourhood is explosive for our personal walk with Jesus and ministry in a postmodern world.

As we journey through Advent to the place of delivery, the Christ Event, Christmas, let us pause long enough to contemplate what Jesus in our neighbourhood might mean again.

The obvious needs to be stated – Jesus gave up his privilege to come to where we are. Philippians 2:5-8 is evidence of that. Jesus existed with God the Father and the Holy Spirit in heaven. Jesus' coming to earth meant leaving the purity of heaven to come into a fallen world. It meant the immortal putting on the mortal. In other words, the one who could not die was now able to die. Jesus, who was accustomed to being infinite was not restricted to a body. Giving up privilege meant reducing himself to a fetus and subjecting himself to the birthing process. Even though Jesus was both human and divine, a baby is a baby. He was vulnerable. Other people had power over him.

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### Vision Statement

**A Church - Transformed,  
United,  
Victorious in Christ**

### Mission Statement

**By the grace of God, we seek to be faithful to our Lord Jesus Christ; without distinction, we use all that we possess to call all peoples to the truth of the Gospel through worship, evangelism, discipleship and service.**

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**Advance the Kingdom ~ S.H.I.F.T**

The privilege of immediate communion with the Father was also broken. Whereas in his original state they were consistently together, in his human state, there was distance. The distance was such that Jesus now had to be deliberate to seek God. Scripture records Jesus going out early in the morning or making space at other times to connect and commune with God (Hebrews 5:7; Luke 6:12). The privilege of instant connection was lost to him. Effort was now required.

In reflecting on privilege lost by Jesus, each Christ-follower must also look at the privileges that must be forfeited in our pursuit of Christ. My mind runs to things I did not want to give up when the Spirit of God drew me into a definitive commitment to Christ. I am thinking of living like my peers – the desire for self-gratification – lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and the pride of life (1 John 2:16). But there is more.

Jesus calls us to a place of surrender. That may mean that one's future career is not a matter of personal choice but a divine command. In other words, I may feel drawn to politics or to plumbing, or psychology, but the Spirit is pulling me elsewhere. Some see the right to self-determination as a most fundamental one. Like Jesus, that privilege must be surrendered to God. Of course this is revolting! But the reality of Jesus moving into our neighbourhood challenges us to go beyond nice platitudes to the deeper demand of the cruciform life. The retention of privilege keeps us in the place of safety and self-determination. Jesus moving into our neighbourhood helps us to realize that more is possible when we cross boundaries.

Jesus in my neighbourhood tells me that Jesus wants to get proximate. Proximity is serious business. When Jesus entered the neighbourhood, he came so that he could be part of the neighbourhood rather than just live in it. If the intent was to live in the neighbourhood, then he could have come as an adult. He came as a baby so that he would be fully integrated and identified with the neighbourhood. The people who live in a neighbourhood know the nuances of the locality more than people who just come in to study it. It is their lived experience. When they speak and act, they do so from a place of intimate knowledge.

What does this mean for Christian ministry? Among other things, it means that we take on the burden of the community and act from that place of a shared burden.

Rather than talking down to people and reminding them about how bad they are, we work with persons in their process to be liberated from the bondages of sin and the

trappings of the past. Proximity allows us to see the pregnant teenager more as a victim rather than a bad child. The same may be said for the young man who finds himself on the wrong side of the law. Proximity forces us to go beyond the problem to the realities that create the issues. Proximity helps us to humanize them as Jesus did with the woman caught in adultery (John 8: 2-11).

Proximity is about presence. Sometimes the church is afraid to get into the trenches because it is felt that we do not have the financial resources to make a difference in the circumstances. The truth is, journeying with people in their struggle is irreplaceable. The church is not present to be Saviour. We are present to represent Jesus, who saves. When we allow God to move in these circumstances, the possibilities are endless. An after class programme, a dental clinic, counselling services, family intervention programmes are all efforts at being proximate. We must change the image of the church from being a community that is consistently stretching out its hands to one that comes alongside people and serves their needs.

As we celebrate Christmas in a ranging pandemic that exposed the raw needs in our society, we must recommit to the communities that God has called us to serve. We must follow the pattern of Jesus and be deeply rooted in the places where we live and act out of concern for others even when there is a personal cost for us. Until Christ-followers and churches become more conscious of their neighbourhoods and help to bear the burdens of those neighbourhoods, we might just be seen as other predators who are there for what they can get rather than for how they can be partners for good. Jesus showed us how to give up our privilege and get proximate and represent God. Our Lamb has shown us, let us follow him!





## Bishop's Christmas Message 2020



***“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.” Luke 2.14***

“Good Tidings of Great Joy to All People” is the title to James Montgomery’s hymn, “Angels from the Realms of Glory” as it appeared in his *Original Hymns*, 1853.

The actual words of the angels’ song are “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men!”

This is not a prayer, but an ascription. The angels did not pray for Glory to be given to God; rather they exclaimed, “Glory to God in the highest!”—they themselves gave glory to God because peace had come on earth, and good will had already been going out toward all people.

Too often the focus that is given to Christmas is merely secular, and many people don’t really focus on the reason for the season—that is on God and his unspeakable gift to us in sending Christ to redeem the world.

Here in the Caribbean, our focus is often not only secular but on particular cultural expressions of the season which are alien to the experience of the majority of people, such as snow and sleighs and reindeer and apple pie. Many people don’t even pause for a moment to go to church at Christmas to worship the Christ child, but pass up no occasion for partying. There is nothing intrinsically wrong with partying, but let’s get things in perspective this Christmas.

The year 2020 has been like no other year that we have experienced. The COVID-19 pandemic has altered significantly how we live in community and in our homes, in our schools and in our work-places. Social interactions have been significantly altered. Many families have been touched by the pandemic, either we or some family member has tested positive to the virus or a relative or persons known to us have died as a result. We cannot be carefree this Christmas season.

This, however, is not a negative thing. The presence of the COVID-19 virus gives opportunity for our focus on the real meaning of Christmas. We should thank God for his stupendous gift of Christ, who came in the person of the Babe of Bethlehem to be the savior of the world and we should again receive him into our hearts and lives. We should also show goodwill towards all people by intentionally doing all we can to promote the welfare and safety of others in every respect, including the wearing of masks and social distancing even at Christmas. We should spare a thought and a kindly deed towards someone or some persons who perhaps have been unemployed or are hungry as a result of COVID-19 rather than focusing our gift-giving on someone who can reciprocate our Christmas gift. That would indeed be a reflection on our part of God’s good will to all men.

Let us, then, do at least two things this Christmastide: Give glory to God and practice good will toward all people.

Glory to God in the highest!

Have a blessed Christmas.

Conrad Spencer & Kingsley Lewis, Episcopi Fratrum

# *Fourteen Years of Dedicated Service to the Moravian Church E.W.I.P 2006–2020*

On December 31, 2020, Mrs. Menelva Samuel will transition into full retirement after serving as the Administrative Assistant of the Moravian Church Eastern West Indies Province. It is unlikely that Mrs. Samuel is known to most of the Provincial family, yet her work has been central to the proper management and functioning of the Province.



As Mrs. Samuel retires, we have brought her from her background into the light through this interview. This was a free-flowing conversation as she shared about her experiences being on staff at the Provincial Office. Mrs. Samuel is a member of the Lebanon Moravian Church in Antigua. She has served as Sunday School Superintendent, Sunday School teacher, Elder, and Children's Ministry leader. She has served in many other capacities at her congregation and in the Antigua Conference.

Mrs. Samuel came on board on October 16, 2006. In 2005, her employment at the Halcyon Hotel came to an end and she was in search of a new career opportunity that would allow her to use her skills garnered over many years. Her eyes were set on a few options until she received a call.

The Rev. Errol Connor had just been elected Chair of the Provincial Board and there was a need for new staff. Someone suggested Mrs. Menelva Samuel. She was invited to an interview where the job was offered to her. After prayer and contemplation, Mrs. Samuel decided to accept the job of Administrative Assistant. She had not worked at those rates since the 1980s. They agreed on the remuneration package, which was still small but was hardly a factor that would affect her willingness to serve. She was reminded by a friend that she always wanted to

volunteer with the church, so this was her opportunity.

After a two-week hand-over from Mrs. Ida Brown, widow of the late Bishop Neville Brown, she was now fully in charge of the office and the operations at the headquarters. Mrs. Samuel brought her vast experience working in

various departments in the hospitality industry to bear on the operations and structure of the Office. "The transition was rough." This was a new experience as there was no set structure. She had responsibility for all the operations of the office with her main responsibility being managing all aspects of the finances.

Mrs. Samuel was very concerned about order and structure. One of her tasks was to improve the filing and the reporting structures. The office files were integrated and structured. Even though the information was present, it was not all in the right place. At that time, the accounting system was manual which she had not done for many years. In due course she ensured that the manual based accounting procedures were upgraded to the computer. Bro. Levi Bradshaw who served as Provincial Treasurer at that time was an integral part of the transition. All the accounts had to be entered and properly structured for ease of reference and use. This was tedious work but she "took the bull by the horn" to get it done. When that was done, she headed to St. Kitts to work with the Treasurer to code and finalize the installation of the finance system for the Provincial Office. This also involved transferring everything to Quickbooks. The next step was to have the books audited. Having audited books was not the norm. Since then, the books are audited each year and the audited statement sent to the Province or presented to Synod. Mrs. Samuel has been commended by the auditors for her excellence in this area.

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While doing this work, she was also managing the property. In the early period, the rooms were occupied by medical students which required consistent supervision. She committed herself and multitasked to get the job done. It was more than work; it was ministry. Mrs. Samuel declared, “be that as it may, I enjoy what I do.” She reports that no matter what was happening, she got up on work days wanting to come to the office to get the work done as a true servant of God.

Mrs. Samuel tells of a comment by a former member of staff of the inability to cash their salary cheque at the bank because of insufficient funds. She confidently told that person, “not on my watch.” After fourteen years of keeping the Provincial Books, she has been able to keep that promise. Sis. Samuel is very efficient in her management of the finances; able to rationalize payments based on the limited resources. It has not been an easy task, but she has managed to keep the books balanced.

As building administrator, she had to undertake projects to maintain the building as much as the funds would allow. She also coordinated the rental of the auditorium. This meant that she had to be out late at night or early in the morning to ensure the auditorium was ready for worship for the Cashew Hill congregation or other users of the space. She believes in the complex as a marketable product. If upgraded and marketed, it can be a major revenue earner. This has been affirmed to her many times by repeat clients. During her time at the Office, she has had to go beyond the call of duty to ensure the building was ready for occupancy. Collecting garbage, cleaning the rooms, and setting up the auditorium may be required at any given time. It was all a labour of love.

In terms of memories of her time at the Provincial Office, Mrs. Samuel treasures the working relationship she has with the secretary Mrs. Joan Thomas. She notes that they worked very well together and their level of maturity and focus on the job at hand have enabled them to take the work to the next level. She is also simply grateful that she got to work for the church at this level. She sees the opportunity as “ordained by God.” Working with the church was on her bucket list and she got to do it without much effort on her part in that the job was offered to her rather than her going after it. “To God be the glory!”

“I want to believe that there are ideas floating around the place...I pray by the grace of God that things would happen...I thought I would have left here seeing the complex in a better state.” She still hopes to see major renovations of the complex. Mrs. Samuel thanks the members of the Provincial Boards over the years and all the Provincial Treasurers who were partners on this journey.

Post retirement, Mrs. Samuel is looking forward to dedicating more time to her adorable grandchildren who are three years and one year old and volunteering with CEF-Child Evangelism Fellowship. She also plans to spend more time in her garden. Working in her local congregation has been a constant in her life, so that will also continue. Above all, Mrs. Samuel is simply grateful to be alive and to live beyond her three score years and ten.

The Provincial family extends warm congratulations to Mrs. Norma Menelva Samuel on her retirement as the Administrative Assistant of the Provincial Office of the Eastern West Indies Provincial. We pray that the God who called you, equipped you, provided for you, and sustained you, will continue to be your joy and compass. May Psalm 92: 12-14 be your portion - The righteous flourish like the palm tree and grow like a cedar in Lebanon. They are planted in the house of the Lord; they flourish in the courts of our God. They still bear fruit in old age; they are ever full of sap and green.





## Birthday Celebrants December 18th - 25th

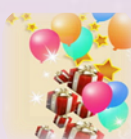
Bro. Hilton Joseph	18
Bro. Vankys Isaac	18
Cecile Rossington	22
Sis. Maureen Lewis	23
Bro. Alvin Barker	25
Bro. Matthew Crooks	25
Sis. Olga Baird-Joefield	25



## Anniversary Celebrants December 14th - January 15th

Bro. Erwin Warner & Sis. Onita Samuel-Warner	19
Bro. Algernon & Sis. Denise Smith-Lewis	20
Bro. Errol & Sis. Joycelyn Connor	22
Bro. Patmore & Sis. Jovanca Lewis-Smith	27
Bro. Hilton & Sis. Sharon McCurdy-Joseph	29
Bro. Nevin & Sis. Billie Sterling-Lewis	05

## Birthday Celebrants January 4th - 12th



Sis. Margaret John	4
Sis. Jovanca Lewis-Smith	5
Sis. Sonia Spencer	11
Bro. Moise Jean	12

## Congratulations

The Moravian Provincial family extends congratulations to the Rev. Dr. Cicely Athill-Horsford on her election as the Chairman of the Barbados Christian Council. The election was held on December 7, 2020. Sis. Athill-Horsford is the first female to be elected Chairman of this Christian Council.

Let us pray for Sis. Athill-Horsford as she assumes this role in the wider Christian community in Barbados.

## KINDNESS CALENDAR: DECEMBER 2020

### MONDAY



### TUESDAY

### WEDNESDAY

### THURSDAY

### FRIDAY

### SATURDAY

### SUNDAY

7 Leave a positive message for someone else to find

14 Share a happy memory or inspiring thought with a loved one

21 Appreciate kindness and thank people who do things for you

28 Be kind to the planet. Eat less meat and use less energy

1 Share the Kindness Calendar with others and spread kindness

8 Do something helpful for a friend or family member

15 Contact an elderly neighbour and brighten up their day

22 Congratulate someone for an achievement that may go unnoticed

29 Turn off digital devices and really listen to people

2 Contact someone you can't be with to see how they are

9 Notice when you're hard on yourself or others and be kind instead

16 Look for something positive to say to everyone you speak to

23 Choose to give or receive the gift of forgiveness

30 Let someone know how much you appreciate them and why

3 Offer to help someone who is facing difficulties at the moment

10 Listen wholeheartedly to others without judging them

17 Practice gratitude. List the kind things others have done for you

24 Bring joy to others. Share something which made you laugh

31 Plan some new acts of kindness to do in 2021

4 Give kind comments to as many people as possible today

11 Be generous. Feed someone with food, love or kindness today

18 Give away something that you have been holding on to

25 Treat everyone with kindness today, including yourself!

5 Make a gift for someone who is homeless or feeling lonely

12 Buy an extra item and donate it to a local food bank

19 Buy locally and support independent shops near you

26 Get outside. Pick up litter or do something kind for nature

6 Support a charity, cause or campaign you really care about

13 See how many different people you can smile at today

20 Contact someone who may be alone or feeling isolated

27 Call a relative who is far away to say hello and have a chat

Let's look beyond our differences and help each other. Every act of kindness matters

ACTION FOR HAPPINESS

#DoGoodDecember

www.actionforhappiness.org

Learn more about this month's theme at [www.actionforhappiness.org/do-good-december](http://www.actionforhappiness.org/do-good-december)

Keep Calm · Stay Wise · Be Kind

# Advance the Kingdom ~ S.H.I.F.T

## WORD SEARCH The Birth of Jesus

ALL the words listed below are in the puzzle - left, right, up, down or diagonally. Find each word and click its first letter then its last letter to highlight it.

ANGELS	JOSEPH
BETHLEHEM	KING OF THE JEWS
BIRTH	MANGER
CENSUS	MARY
CHRIST	MYRRH
DAVID	NAZARETH
EAST	PROPHECY
EGYPT	SACRIFICE
ELISABETH	SAVIOUR
FLOCKS	SHEPHERDS
FRANKINCENSE	SON
GABRIEL	STAR
GIFTS	SWADDLING
GOD	CLOTHES
GOLD	THRONE
HEROD	TIDINGS
HOLY SPIRIT	VIRGIN
IMMANUEL	WISEMEN
JESUS	

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

**BIBLE  
STUDY**

Stay  
in the  
Word



Kindly use the King James version of the Bible and answer all questions. Luke 16-18

- Which phrase best describes the theme of the parable of the Widow and the unjust Steward?
- To whom was the parable of the Pharisees and the Publican addressed?
- How many of the Ten commandments did Jesus mention in His conversation with the rich young ruler?
- What was the response of the people to the blind man who cried out, "Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me"?
- What was the response of the people after he received his sight?
- Answer True or False: The ruler was very happy when Jesus told him of the one thing he lacked.
- Complete" "You cannot serve God and .....
- Why did the Lord commend the unjust steward?
- In the parable of Lazarus and the rich man, to whom did the rich man cry?
- "If ... but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent." Did Abraham agree with this statement?
- Which is correct? The one leper who turned back to give thanks was a
  - Galilean
  - Samaritan
  - Jew
- Which city was destroyed on the same day that Lot left?
- How did the steward prepare himself for the time when he would be put out of stewardship?
- Why did the rich man ask for Lazarus to be sent to his brothers?
- What did Jesus say about any person who offends one of these little ones?

**Advance the Kingdom ~ S.H.I.F.T**

# Moravian Multipurpose Complex



## Conference Center & Apartments



*Conferences*

*Seminars*

*Weddings*

*Banquets*

*Meetings*

*Dinners*

*Graduations*

Only ten minutes away from the stores, shops and banks in St. John's.

Our International airport is also just ten minutes away.

Our balcony provides a refreshing view of undulating hills and valleys.

The Conference Center has a seating capacity for 200 persons.

We are situated on a hill overlooking the picturesque out-skirts of the city of St. John's, Antigua.

There are EIGHT LARGE APARTMENTS which are available for rental. Each room is self contained with kitchenette. The rooms are air-conditioned with available internet and cable TV. All utilities are included with the exception of telephone.

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### Answer to Bible Study

- |               |               |                |                |                |                |                |
|---------------|---------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| 1. A          | 2. Luke 16:22 | 3. Luke 18:20  | 4. Luke 18:39  | 5. Luke 18:43  | 6. Luke 18:23  | 7. Luke 16:13  |
| 8. Luke 16:8  | 9. Luke 17:24 | 10. Luke 16:31 | 11. Luke 17:11 | 12. Luke 17:29 | 13. Luke 17:39 | 14. Luke 16:28 |
| 15. Luke 17:2 |               |                |                |                |                |                |