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NAPARIMA GIRLS' & HILLVIEW WIN PRESIDENT'S MEDALS

PRESBYTERIAN SECONDARY SCHOOLS CAPTURE
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ast month we joined with the national and international communities in celebrating the courage and determination of ordinary women who continue to play an extraordinary role in the history of our churches, our communities, and our nation. We also continued our Lenten journey of self-examination,

(PCTT) through the Board of Women (BOW) to mark the occasion of International Women's Day on o8 March. The United Nations had issued the theme "Choose to Challenge", which invited all of us to move from challenge to change, to forge a gender-equal world. In doing so, we celebrate women's achievements; raise awareness

stereotypes, fight bias, broaden our perspective and make interventions to improve relationships. Women are urged to shake up traditional pieties and preconceptions in the quest for a better life. As leaders, we must cut through outmoded practices and introduce news systems. Women are called to lead in God's way and to offer God's vision of a society of

Experience has shown that neither our political, nor religious, nor civil society leaders have the solution to combat this scourge on our society.

self-reflection and introspection promoted in the Lenten Booklet published by the St Andrew's Theological College (SATC). In addition, of course, it was one year ago last month that the Covid-19 pandemic invaded our space.

We participated in activities organised by the Presbyterian Church of Trinidad and Tobago against bias and act towards equality.

It is with deep sadness that we had to mark this occasion against the backdrop of senseless violence and acts of cruelty aimed at women and girls. In a world dominated by injustices, violence, lack of trust, inequality, and human degradation the demand is for us to challenge

peace, unity, equality, and justice, in a place dominated by competing visions.

We talk a lot. We analyse and offer suggestions. We condemn unequivocally the escalation of crime and violence in our country and follow this up with candlelight vigils and panel discussions and even develop programmes for change, but do they make a

Moderator speaks

difference? Is anyone listening? While we want to be proactive in our approach to dealing with violence, as a church community, we must be cautious in that call for imposing the death penalty and other preventative measures without prayerful consideration. Is anyone listening?

The fact is gender-based violence is a systemic problem and requires a systemic approach in mitigating. It is very simple to point to a particular societal failure but that is equivalent to losing sight of the forest through the trees. Experience has shown that neither our political, nor religious, nor civil society leaders have the solution to combat this scourge on our society. Yet, we must persevere in a partnership using all our institutions and our human and intellectual resources to make a difference. This involves:

PARLIAMENT/LEGISLATURE

To enact laws that protect core values and norms and bring about peace and good order.

CIVIL SOCIETY

To sensitise the national community about our beliefs, core values and norms. To coordinate community activities that will encourage respect for one another. Assist citizens to understand that there are values and institutions in Trinidad and Tobago worth fighting for.

EXECUTIVE BRANCH

Law enforcement agencies must

feel empowered to enforce the laws of our land without fear or favour. They must be properly equipped with the tools and technology of the trade.

JUDICIAL BRANCH

Our courts must be effective and efficient.

RELIGIOUS LEADERS

They must help their members and other citizens to see the link between a good life; being human and respecting law and order. Promote healthy relationships between parents/children.

EDUCATION

Teachers play a vital role in teaching our children those life lessons that do not appear in the syllabus.

THE HOME AND FAMILY

Mothers must teach their boys the value of expression and respect. Fathers must teach their girls what is acceptable and what is intolerable. Parents must teach their children how to deal with rejection and relationships. It takes a village to raise a child with the appropriate value system to make a worthwhile contribution to society, through care and supervision. Good parenting needs to be revisited, as previous social norms and expectations have changed and contributed to the decay of this notion. The family unit can once more become the bedrock of society and the springboard for the proliferation of foundational beliefs with respect to charity,



THE RT. REVEREND JOY ABDUL-MOHAN

love, kindness, and respect for the sanctity of human life.

We pray that God will reveal to all stakeholders some concrete actions to be taken regarding violence and other social ills. Perhaps God is calling us to devise a structured Family Life Education Programme in our Churches and Schools that treats with human values, respect for one another and the sanctity of life. We urge all Presbyterians and citizens to lift up in prayer to Almighty God the well-being of our Churches, religious organizations, and Nation; for the guidance of our President and Prime Minister, our Parliamentarians and all our leaders who govern and exercise authority, that we may all work together for justice and equality and the good of all citizens. May God bless our Church and Nation!

Prayers are never enough. We pray for all those who have lost loved ones through violent acts and heinous crimes. We also pray for the perpetrators to be brought to justice and may they turn away from their evil ways. Are we listening?

Blessings always!

ACCOUNTING TO MEMBERSHIP

ater this month the
Presbyterian Church of
Trinidad and Tobago
(PCTT) will hold its
Annual General Meeting where
reports from its various Boards
and Committees will be received
and discussed. These reports
would hopefully reflect how the
church body managed both its
pastoral functions and financial
resources in a year dominated by
the Covid-19 pandemic.

This year's AGM is particularly important because it is an election year for the Synod.
The congregations of the 107 churches throughout the country have elected their Elders and Local Boards. The Sessions of the 24 pastoral regions have selected their representatives to the Synod and the three Presbyteries.

These representatives will form the newly constituted Synod, from whose membership the Synodical Council will emerge. In a corporate sense, the Synodical Council is the responsible body between sittings of the Synod. The Moderator is elected by the Synod for a two-year term. The current Moderator, the Right

Reverend Joy Abdul-Mohan is eligible for re-election for another two-year term.

The AGM reinforces the democratic ethos of the PCTT as affirmed by the pioneer missionaries 153 years ago. Despite amendments over the years, the PCTT has been faithful to its articles of faith and provided the servant-leadership necessary to bring Christ to the people. We are blessed with men and women, both in the clergy and laity, who are committed to Christ and the Church. This commitment was even more visible during the Covid-19 pandemic. It brought out the best in us as a church community increasing the level of caring, compassion and concern.

In a nation where unsubstantiated social media opinions are regarded as fact, the Church's penchant for transparency and accountability is like an oasis of hope that truth can once more prevail. As a Church we should all be concerned of the deleterious effect of untruths on the psyche of a society. Peddling disinformation or misinformation

almost brought the mighty
USA to the brink of a civil war
during the first week of January
2021. Within recent times we
have observed that information
coming from responsible
organisations leaned ominously
on assumptions and not on
facts. This is a dangerous
development, which can only
widen the divisions in our nation
that so many of us wish could
be narrowed.

There are no permutations to truth. Truth is truth. We recall that Pontius Pilate was troubled by truth and wanted an explanation from our Lord. "What is truth?". he asked Jesus. Sadly, he walked away and did not wait for the answer. He failed to grasp that truth was staring him in the face. It seems that some of our leaders in society are doing just like Pontius Pilate - walking away from truth. The Presbyterian Church, by its level of democratic interaction with its membership, should be an example to secular Trinidad and Tobago.

NAPARIMA GIRLS' HIGH SCHOOL & HILLVIEW COLLEGE WIN PRESIDENT'S MEDALS



wo Presbyterian
Secondary Schools
captured the two
President's Medals based
on the 2020 Caribbean Advanced
Proficiency Examinations (CAPE).
Presbyterian Secondary Schools
also won 39 of the 100 National
Scholarships offered by the Ministry
of Education.

Anjali Maharaj of Naparima Girls'
High School (NGHS) in San Fernando
and Amrit Galbaran of Hillview
College, Tunapuna were awarded
the President's Medals. Maharaj
won in the field of Business Studies,
Creative and Performing Studies,
General Studies, Humanities/

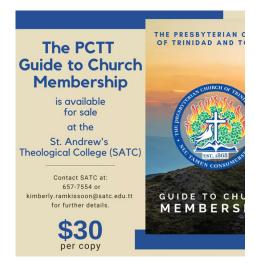
Modern Studies, Language Studies and Technical Studies. Galbaran won in the field of Environmental Studies, Information and Communication Technology, Mathematics and Natural Sciences.

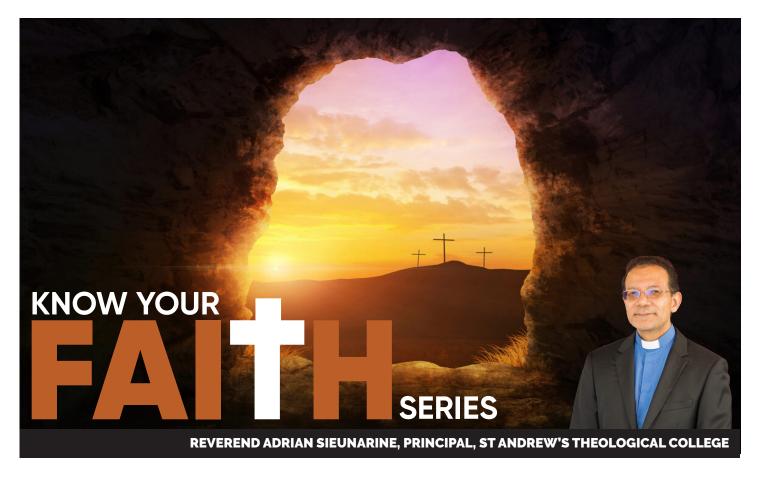
NGHS won 12 scholarships – six Open and six Additional; Hillview College won 10 scholarships – four Open and six Additional; Naparima College won 10 scholarships – five Open and five Additional; St Augustine Girls' High School won 7 scholarships – five Open and two Additional.

In a media statement, the
Presbyterian Church praised
principals, teachers, parents,
and students for their "hard work
and sacrifice through the global
pandemic". The statement added,
"The PCTT through its educational
institutions has always engaged in
holistic education and maintained
academic, spiritual and moral
education. Education should not
only make our youths brighter but

better human beings and worthy citizens of our nation. That is the strength of the denominational schools."

The high level of performance of denominational secondary schools in these external examinations comes at a time when government has signalled its intention to review the 1960 Concordat. The excellent results by denominational secondary schools call for a strengthening of the Concordat in favour of this joint approach to education in Trinidad and Tobago.





WE ARE AN EASTER PEOPLE

hrist is risen. Because
Christ lives, we live.
Christianity lives. We are an
Easter people. If Christ had
not risen from the dead then our
faith would be futile (1 Corinthians
15:14). Because Christ lives, we are
death-defying, life-defining, divinedeclaring doers (James 1:22) of the
Living Word (John 1:14) and Wisdom
of God (1 Corinthians 1:24). The light
of the Resurrection shines in our
lives.

Here are three realities of what it means to live in the light of the Resurrection:

 Every moment of every day is a time to thank the Lord and recognise that the Lord lives, we live, and we are called to live for our Living Lord. This world is a place of chaos, violence, pain, death and destruction. The Lord alone gives and guarantees eternal life. Only Christ has the words of life (John 6:68) because only Christ is the Word of Life. We are called to boldly and counter-culturally proclaim and embody that life-word in our thoughts, words and actions.

 Communion is not a sad memorial about a murdered hero. Good Friday is not a reenactment of a painful story that culminated in tragedy. Faith in Christ is not a protracted funeral. Christ came to give life in all its abundance (John 10:10). Communion echoes the promise of Christ that people will come from all corners of creation (Luke 13:29) and feast with the reunited community of the faithful (Matthew 8:11).

3. Jesus Christ listens to us even when the doors are locked, and we don't see Him (John 20: 24-29). We think of every home, every church, every meeting, every conversation, every action. Christ calls us to believe and to behave in His risen presence and power with us.

boys don't cry... *REALLY?*



COUNSELLING COLUMN WITH BERNADETTE GYAN-MANICKCHAND



How can we begin changing inappropriate behaviours in our boys today?

n attempting to answer this loaded question, we need to be mindful of the literature and research pertaining to the socialisation of the male infant. From as early as pre-school, the gender bias begins when we teach, "What are little girls made of? Sugar and spice and everything nice. What are little boys made of? Frogs and snails and puppy dog tails." – One of the genders clean and sweet, the other ugly and dirty.

Our society expects different attitudes and behaviours from our boys and our girls. Girls should be prim and proper, boys rough and tough. Both would cry – as children should when they hurt – but are we sympathetic to the boys when we say, 'Boys don't cry!'? They are labelled as "sissies" and "momma's boys" when they show a sensitive side.

Boys are raised to conform to the male gender roles, and girls to the female. Young children look to the role models in their homes and, while there may be many role models for the girls, the male presence is sadly lacking. Feelings of disappointment, frustration and even anger can develop and fester unless intervention takes place.

Now we look at the biological makeup of our males. Our feelings and behaviours start with our thoughts. It is important that we understand the differences in the 'wiring' of the male brain to the female brain. Our present primary education system does not cater for different learning styles. This may be the reason why girls are leading in academics all the way up to secondary and tertiary levels. From observation and outreach activities many young males have lost their sense of worth.

So, what do we do besides pray?
The basic institutions of family and school can respond effectively to our boys' early behaviours by making home and school contexts more conducive to learning, therefore weakening the connection between behaviours that prevent learning – formally and informally – from taking place. Let us start with the first teacher...the mother.

(to be continued in next issue of the Trinidad Presbyterian)





THE FAMILY CAN: A MONTHLY THOUGHT TO HELP IMPROVE THE FAMILY | HILTON R SIBOO

uring an interview with a kidnap-for-ransom victim, a young child about four years old said to me as she was leaving the room, 'Don't take my mommy.' The child pointed her finger and repeated, 'Don't take my mommy', even as she had a smile on her face. I had to reassure her that I would not, and had to convince her that before I left, she would come back into the room and have her mommy. She went with her grandma, but occasionally she came to peek. When I was leaving, she came back in, smiled at me and rushed into her mother's arms.

This narrative had a happy ending, but its dynamics indicate the effects and impact that family members, including children, experience when a family member goes missing. This particular family crisis lasted a short while, but for many families the crisis is prolonged.

Some persons who go missing may be found alive, and in good

health; or they may be battered and tortured. The family can physically embrace and attempt to restore their lives, but the scars and trauma remain, often to be re-lived.

Other times, missing persons are eventually found dead. The family finds comfort in closure, but the long-term effects on the mental health and wellness of family members are difficult to measure. The rituals of 'sending home' are just meagre comfort.

Then there are the persons who go missing 'without a trace' or disappear 'into thin air'. This leaves an emptiness, trauma and PTSD that comes from the absence of any form of closure. Time stands still, during this agonising wait for some news, some information, some sighting, some hope that the missing person would return 'dead or alive'. The family goes into crisis whenever a member is missing. Recent incidents in Trinidad and Tobago have pushed our physical,

emotional, psychological and religious boundaries of tolerance to their limits, with surviving family members questioning the government, the protective services and agencies, and even God.

It is quite understandable that as the list of missing persons grows longer, we turn to prayers, candlelight vigils, marches, and protest movements assigning blame. While these may be useful, we as human beings also need to take a critical look at our moral, cultural and religious socialisation to see where we went wrong and what can we do to stop what is happening.

Remember, the family is not just a group or gathering without a common purpose. Never let it be said that the family cannot adjust as changes occur. Don't lose faith. Hold on strong. Believe. The Family Can.



God made woman from man, with just a rib and that ain't no fib.

Men need women just as women need men.

If we don't work hand in hand what are we left to do then?

We're supposed to love and help one another.

You know walk hand in hand, take a stand.

A sister needs her brother
like a son needs his mother.
Both men and women committing
their own kinds of crime.
Don't you think that it's time
that Gender based violence needs to end!?
Everybody just stop and do your part
by looking out for your friend.

Be your brother's and sister's keeper.

Protecting ourselves hasn't gotten any cheaper.

Gender based violence is not only a women's issue,
 it is a human issue.

Change can happen start with just me and you.

It affects us all whether big or small.

Ladies just want to enjoy living their life and having fun without the fear of a man walking up to them holding a knife or a gun. Men are supposed to protect us yet here I am living in fear. Violence happens here, there and everywhere.

I wish I can live a life without danger time
for the Prime Minister to wake up
and listen to what the people say
for it can be a game changer.
So please dear Prime Minister
listen to what the people say.
We want a change to happen not tomorrow,
not next week, next month or next year but today.
So, ladies and gentlemen, boys and girls
all who agree with what I say, say booyah
and let God protect us today and always
Hallelujah!

RACHEL-ANN NICOLETTE YOUNG HOO, KNOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, COUVA





South-Central Presbytery Inducts New Minister at Marabella/Bonne Aventure

MARLENE SHAH

he South-Central
Presbytery of the
Presbyterian Church of
Trinidad and Tobago

(PCTT) inducted Reverend Dr
Randall Sammah as minister of the
Marabella/Bonne Aventure Pastoral
Region on Sunday 24 January 2021.

The induction service was held at the Bonne Aventure Presbyterian Church. Leading worship was Presiding Elder Indra Debysingh. The Act of Induction was performed by Reverend Ria Thompson-Jimdar, Vice-Chairperson of the Presbytery. Participating in the service were Dindial Ramlogan, Joy Sammah, Sandra Singh and Reverend Shirvan Siloch.

Reverend Letra Jacob of the Susamachar Pastoral Region brought the message from God's Word found in Isaiah 6:1-8 and St Mark 8:27-33. She urged Reverend Sammah to listen ardently to God's call and God's voice and use these to inspire him as he ministers to the Pastoral Region. He was encouraged to be a leader, rather than to be led.

Clerk of Session of the Marabella/Bonne Aventure Pastoral Region
Shirlyn Beharry brought greetings
on behalf of the region, while Synod
Moderator the Rt. Reverend Joy
Abdul-Mohan brought greetings
from the Synod. Reshma Sohan and
family provided a live stream of the
service.



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s a woman firstly, but also a daughter, wife, mother and female physician, I am honoured to support International Women's Day 2021 which was celebrated on 08 March 2021. The theme selected by the United Nations for this year's celebration of International Women's Day was, "WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP: ACHIEVING AN **EQUAL FUTURE IN A COVID-19** WORLD". This highlights the sacrificial efforts by women and girls around the world in shaping an equal future as well as offering steps in recovering from the Covid-19 pandemic.

The colour chosen for the International Women's Day is purple. Purple is also my favourite colour. However, green is also a colour associated with the feminist movement. Purple denotes justice and dignity while green reflects a symbol of hope. The theme coincides with that of the Commission on the Status of Women which calls for "women's

full and effective participation in

decision making in public life as well as the elimination of violence, achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls".

The Generation Equality Campaign also calls for "women's rights to decision making in all areas of life, equal pay, equal sharing of unpaid care and domestic work, and end all forms of violence against women and girls, and health care service that respond to their needs." The point is, whether we serve in the public or private spheres, we should be aware of women's needs and offer services to empower and treat them in a holistic manner.

Women stand at the frontline in this Covid-19 crisis (heath care workers, caregivers, organizers) and are some of the most exemplary and effective national leaders in combating the pandemic. As a grateful mother of two boys – the pandemic has forced me to make personal decisions with respect to

balancing work-

life-health and

online schooling.

Situations like these have made women grow in the face of ongoing challenges. The COVID-19 pandemic has proposed changes not just on institutions (public/private/parallel health care sectors) but on the female physician to make sacrifices and juggle duties while practicing protocols in the workplace to keep our families safe upon return from duty.

In conclusion, in a world of hash tags (#IWD2021 #CHOOSETOCHALLENGE) and influencers, how can one help to forge a gender-equal world? There are three suggestions: that we celebrate women's achievements; raise awareness against bias; and take action for equality. Let us all celebrate International Women's Day 2021, as women continue to rise to the challenges of leadership all around the world amidst the Covid-19 pandemic. For more information, visit www.unwomen.

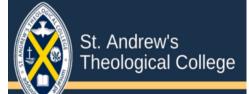
org/en

A WORKING WOMAN'S VIEW: BRING OMEN INTO THE DECISION-MAKING LOOP

DR. RAMONA SANKAR-KHELAWAN



Members of the Susamachar Men's Fellowship Group Celebrating its 34th Anniversary. | Photo - Ivan Toolsie



ELDERS' TRAINING COURSE 2021

Start date Saturday May 1st End date Saturday June 5th

Duration 6 weeks (Saturdays)

Delivery Online

9.00 am - 11.30 am Time

\$500 Cost



St. Andrew's Theological College

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

SUMMER COURSES 2021

Conversational Spanish for Church Leaders

Lecturer: Ms. Leanna Doodnath Date: May 3rd - Jul 19th (12 weeks)

Day: Mondays

Time: 5.30 pm - 8.30 pm

Cost: 1,500 **Delivery: Online**

Constitution of the PCTT

Lecturer: Rev. Keron Khellawan Date: Jun 1st - Aug 17th (12 weeks)

Day: Tuesdays

Time: 5.30 pm - 8.30 pm

Cost: \$1,500 **Delivery: Online** Battles of the Bible:

Blessings for our Battles Today

Lecturer: Rev. Damien Sieunarine Date: May 6th - Jun 24th (6 weeks)

Day: Thursdays

Time: 5.30 pm - 7.30 pm

Cost: \$500 **Delivery: Online**

Women in the Bible

Lecturer: Rev. Sanya Beharry Date: Jun 4th - Jun 25th (4 weeks)

Day: Fridays

Time: 5.30 pm - 8.30 pm

Cost: \$500 **Delivery: Online**

REGISTER NOW!!!





KARAMCHAND B MITCHELL

BARRACKPORE UNION CELEBRATES 110 YEARS

he Moderator of the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Trinidad and Tobago, the Right Reverend Joy Abdul-Mohan, joined with the congregation of the Barrackpore Union Presbyterian Church in celebrating their 110th Anniversary with a Special Service of Thanksgiving and Reflection on Sunday 28 February 2021.

Bringing greetings on behalf of Synod, the Rt. Reverend Abdul-Mohan reflected on her time spent in the then Diamond Barrackpore Region as a Student Minister and as an Intern Minister. She said during that time the value and importance of servant leadership and being a good steward were moulded.

Using the Scripture readings from Deuteronomy 10: 12-22 and 1 Corinthians 12: 12-26. Reverend Abdul-Mohan urged the congregation to continue to build faith and live as a community with Jesus Christ as the corner stone. The church, as one body, can only be successful when each part carries out its responsibilities. She said, there is a difference between the Church and other Social

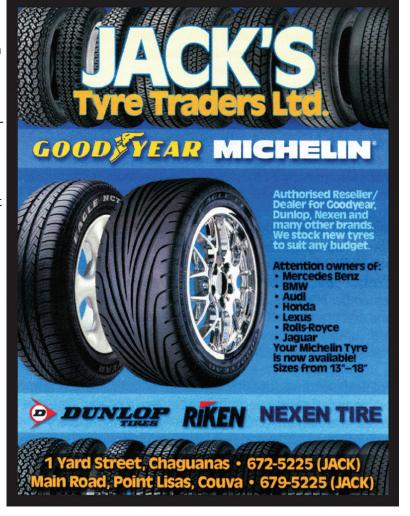
Organizations. "What does the Lord require of us?" With Jesus Christ as head of the church, we, the church must display the love of Christ and be effective in transforming lives, she said.

Reverend Manan Deo led in the

Order of Worship assisted by Presiding Elder William Gokool and Elders.

A brief Historical account noted the growth and development of the church from its first service on Sunday 06 February 1911. At that service only thirteen members formed the first church. Tribute was paid to the pioneers for

their devotion and commitment. The congregation honoured the Managing Director of Team Electrical Harrilal Samuel Arjoon and Staff with a plaque for their invaluable contribution in the construction of the new church building which was completed in 2011.



CONCORDAT CRUCIAL FOR EDUCATION GOALS

he Presbyterian Church of Trinidad and Tobago (PCTT) and by extension the Presbyterian Primary and Secondary Schools' Boards of Education has submitted the Church's position on the Concordat of 1960 to the Secretariat of the National Consultation of Education. The document was dated 25 November 2020 under the signatures of both PCTT General Secretary Terrence Warde and Moderator of Synod the Rt. Reverend Joy Abdul-Mohan.

We publish below the full text of the document.

Position of the Presbyterian Church of Trinidad and Tobago and by extension the Presbyterian Primary Schools' Board of Education and the Presbyterian Secondary Schools' Board of Education on the position of the Concordat of 1960.

The Concordat of 1960 is an agreement between the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Port of Spain and the Government. This agreement was signed sixty years ago by the then Minister of Education and Culture, the Honourable J. S. Donaldson. on behalf of the Cabinet of the Government of Trinidad and Tobago and Father Pedro Valdez on behalf of the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Port of Spain. This has now become 'settled practice' (Judgement of Justice Ventour in 2012 in the case of Kamla Jagessar versus the Teaching Service Commission). Through legal precedent, other Denominational Bodies, including the Presbyterian Church of Trinidad and Tobago, with assisted schools are now legally joined to this agreement.

The Presbyterian Church of Trinidad and Tobago and by extension its

Boards of Education reaffirms its position that the privileges, rights, responsibilities, and commitments guaranteed under the Concordat of 1960 to Denominational Schools under the purview of the respective churches, must be maintained.

The Presbyterian Church is of the considered view that the use of our lands and buildings for the establishment of schools entitles is to the arrangements of the Concordat, which were accepted by the Cabinet of 1960. Therefore, the policies, practices and principles enshrined in the said document are still valid and must be maintained. These fundamental rights are also enshrined in our Constitution of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and supported in the judgement of Justice Sebastian Ventour in the case of Kamla Jagessar versus the Teaching Service Commission in 2012 and will be referenced later.

The Constitution of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago enshrines the following rights:

Chapter I Part I Section 4 (a) "The right of the individual to life,

liberty, security of the person and enjoyment of property and the right not to be deprived thereof except by the process of law,"

Section 4 (f) "The right of a parent or guardian to provide a school of his own choice for the education of his child or ward," and

Section 4 (h) "freedom of conscience and religious beliefs and observance."

The constitutional right of a parent or guardian to provide a school of his/her own choice for the education of his/her child or ward is enshrined in the Constitution of Trinidad and Tobago as noted above, as is freedom of conscience and religious belief and observance. In a judgement delivered on January 2012, in the case of Kamla Jagessar versus the Teaching Service Commission, the Honourable Mr. Justice Ventour noted that:

The right of the parent to choose would be meaningless if there were no alternatives from which the parent could. evaluate, or access before deciding the

most appropriate school for the education of his or her child.

He explained that since prior to the Constitution there were two classes of Public schools. (i) Government and (ii) Assisted of a denominational character. It must have been these alternatives which were contemplated when the right of parents to choose the education for their children was enshrined. In his opinion, the State, therefore, has a constitutional duty to protect the diversity of choices and to preserve the denominational character of assisted schools: in order to give effect and protection. to the right of a parent to choose a school for the education of his/her child. In so doing, however, the assisted schools remain the property of the respective denominational bodies and have a constitutionally protected right to the enjoyment of their property. The right applies to the approval of appointments of persons to teach in their schools as well as the teaching and learning materials employed in these schools.

In the Education Act of 1966, the duty of the Minister to provide a sufficient number of public schools to secure sufficient school places for children of compulsory school age is clearly stated. With only approximately thirty percent of primary school students enrolled in Government schools, the fulfilment of this duty is dependent on the continued existence and maintenance of Denominational Schools.

Our Denominational Schools, both Primary and Secondary are the property of the Presbyterian Church of Trinidad and Tobago, inclusive of lands and buildings. In 2008, the Presbyterian Church of Trinidad and Tobago entered into a Memorandum of Understanding whereby the Ministry of Education undertook to fund one hundred percent of the repairs, renovations, and construction of the schools. However, nowhere in the said Memorandum of Understanding was the legal right of the Presbyterian Church of Trinidad and Tobago to own our property i.e. our schools, inclusive of lands and buildings, our right to ownership and direct control, governance and management of said schools, changed. Therefore, we maintain that our present arrangement as it pertains to the Concordat is in the interest both State and Church.

In 1960, when the Concordat was signed, the State and Churches agreed to collaborate in the provision of Education to our citizens. The provisions established in the Concordat aimed to assume the preservation and character of Denominational Schools including Presbyterian Schools. Denominational Bodies contribute to the agreement of the use of properties and their management expertise and experience. These Denominational Bodies make available to the State one hundred percent of Primary School places based on policies developed by the Ministry of Education and eighty percent of Secondary School places based on placement polices developed by the Ministry of Education e.g., Common Entrance or Secondary Entrance Assessment. The Denominational Bodies. including the Presbyterian, retain the right to place a mere twenty percent in Secondary Schools.

In return, the State undertook to meet some of the cost of education which it continues to do. On an annual basis, the Presbyterian Primary Schools' Board of Education and the Presbyterian Secondary Schools' Board of Education and all our Primary and Secondary Schools together, contribute millions of dollars to the maintenance and administration of our schools.

The Concordat allows a continuing relationship between the State and Denominational Bodies that ensures mutual benefits to both parties. The State has the opportunity to provide schooling for the nation's children while the Denominational Bodies have assurance for the preservation of their religious beliefs and culture in their schools. This is clearly a symbiotic relationship meant to benefit all citizens.

The Presbyterian Church of Trinidad and Tobago assures the national Community of its commitment to work with the Government of Trinidad and Tobago to achieve excellence in our education system. Our schools will continue to provide opportunities for our students to develop their fullest potential, and be critical thinkers with strong religious and moral standards. The continued agreement under the Concordat is crucial to achieving these goals.









INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

GUATCO YOUTHS PRAISE & PAINT

ARIANNA BAILEY AND JADEN SAM

he Guaico Regional
Youth Assembly of
the Guaico Pastoral
Region held a Paint
and Praise virtual activity via
Zoom in commemoration of
International Women's Day. The
event was held on Saturday 06
March 2021. The theme for the
virtual event was, "Generation
Equality". Paint packages were
made and distributed in advance to
participating members.

The young people from the region used art as a means to speak out against injustice and all forms of

Gender Based-Violence. Reverend Sanya Beharry started the event with a message to participants, while Regional Youth Co-ordinator Stephanie Sam welcomed them. Morton Memorial Youth Coordinator Nicole Khellawan led the paint session.

During each phase of the painting there were prayers, the spoken word and a poem. Participants shared their thoughts on Gender-Based Violence explaining what their painting could contribute to put an end to Gender-Based Violence. The evening's events concluded with prayer by Presiding Elder Dr. George Sammy. It was a creative evening praising God and sharing in fellowship virtually. Soli Deo Gloria!

The Paintings were displayed at all five churches in the Region on 14 March during the worship service for International Women's Day. Let us be the change and make a difference for Christ! Let us be the voice for the voiceless and shine God's light in a world that so desperately needs it.





60TH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY GREETINGS

FLORABELLE LUTCHMAN

n Thursday 11 February 2021 Amos and Joyce
Boodoo celebrated their 60th (Diamond)
Wedding Anniversary. On Sunday 07 February
the Marabella Presbyterian Church congregation
recognized this milestone and wished them
continued happiness and many more happy years of married
bliss.

Celebrating sixty years of marriage is indeed an auspicious occasion – a milestone few manage to meet. We all express our love, admiration and respect for this couple who are such a vital part of the Marabella Presbyterian Church community.

TIME TO HEAL THE NATION

NATHANIEL VALLABH-PATEL

he Penal Presbyterian Youth Movement successfully experimented with a virtual and inperson Youth Sunday service last January at the Penal Presbyterian Church. The group led by Tracy-Ann Vallabh-Patel and Karen Moolchan-Jaggernath offered praise to God during the service, which included songs, poetry and the spoken Word.

On Thursday 04 February 2021, the church held a candle-light vigil to remember women and girls who lost their lives through violence. That service included songs and a liturgical dance. Presiding Elder Carlyle Mohan urged the congregation to continue to pray for families who lost loved ones through violence. He said the time has come to pray for the healing of the nation.





he late Reverend Everson T. Sieunarine not only delivered inspiring sermons, but wrote several hymns put to familiar tunes. We publish three of the hymns composed by Reverend Sieunarine. "My Saviour's Church" and "Shine On", which reflected a Caribbean background; and "Our Prayer". Reverend Sieunarine passed away at 71.

MY SAVIOUR'S CHURCH

Suggested Tune: This is My Father's World Words: The Late Reverend E.T. Sieunarine

This is my Saviour's Church
The Bride He waits to claim
While bread and wine, the seal and sign
Of Endless Love remain.
This is my Saviour's Church
To keep her pure and true
Our gifts we share, Christ's yoke we bear
His words we hear and do.

This is my Saviour's Church
Whose prayers and hymns unite
To offer praise, to learn Christ's ways
To help us choose the right.
This is my Saviour's Church
Christ's pleadings never cease
Come follow Him, be cleansed of sin
And serve with blessd peace.

This is my Saviour's Church
In every land and race
New lives are made, God's will obeyed
When thirsts are quenched with grace
This is my Saviour's Church
I build with grateful care
So what I do may long survive
And times of testing bear.

SHINE ON!

Suggested Tune: We have heard a joyful sound, (Jesus saves, Jesus saves)

Words: The Late Reverend E.T. Sieunarine

We can see a vision bright
Let it shine, Let it shine
Shining through the day and night
Let it shine, Let it shine
Let it beam in every place
Where we dwell and where we work
Let it light up every face

We will share the vision bright Let it shine, Let it shine We will serve and walk in light Let it shine, Let it shine

Let it shine, Let it shine

Let our talk unite with deed
As we pray as we forgive
Save us from all lust and greed
Let us shine, Let us shine.

We will live the vision bright
Let it shine, Let it shine
We'll love and choose the right
Let it shine, Let it shine
Let our Church proclaim the Word
Hold the faith, move on with hope
Jesus is the Light and Lord
Let Him shine, Let Him shine.

OUR PRAYER

Suggested Tune: My Jesus I love Thee Words: The Late Reverend E.T. Sieunarine

Lord Jesus we pray now
As Church, as your Bride
For you we surrender all falsehood and pride
Our High Priest, our Leader
Whose Name we do bear
Forgive us our failure
In witness and prayer.

Lord Jesus we pray now
For love to reveal
The work of your Spirit in lives that you heal
Our Shepherd and Master
Whose words we still learn
Guide us in listening
Their truth to discern.

Lord Jesus we pray now
As branch of the vine
To grow in your likeness, so your light will shine
Our Saviour, our Teacher
Increase our weak faith
All fear help us conquer
In life unto death.



Serving As A Presiding Elder Was A Joy

MIKEY BEDASIE, PRESIDING ELDER

ast year the Presbyterian
Church of Trinidad and
Tobago (PCTT) lost one of
its stalwart church workers
who passed to the great beyond
after a lifetime of service to Christ
and the Church.

Harold Latchu died on 02 June 2020 at 88 years old. He was ordained a Presiding Elder of the PCTT in 2002. He worked at the Ministry of Social Welfare and Community Development. He was survived by his wife Fatima Latchu. They were married for 68 years. Harold Latchu had five children, nine grandchildren and five great grandchildren.

Presiding Elder Latchu served with a passion. Even before being ordained as Presiding Elder, he would venture out preaching the Good News from Woodbrook in the north to Couva Balmain in Central and Siparia, south Trinidad. He taught Religious Education at Hillview College and was Secretary of the Local Board of the Curepe Presbyterian Church for 3 years before being elected chairman serving for 17 years.

Serving as a Presiding Elder was his joy. He was assigned to the San Juan/Santa Cruz/Woodbrook, Aramayala and the Curepe/St Joseph Pastoral Regions. His sermons were well researched, and he would structure his messages so that everyone in the congregation was able to understand regardless of age.

The Communications Committee joins with the PCTT in recognizing his dedication and commitment to the Presbyterian Church of Trinidad and Tobago. 'Eternal Rest Grant Unto Him O'Lord'.



Chairman of the St
James Presbyterian
Church Local Board
Trevor Phillip (left) greets
Nadia Mitchell of the
Curepe Presbyterian
Church (right) after
presenting her with a
box of fruits following
her address to the
congregation marking
International Women's
Day on Sunday 14 March
2021

WINDY PARTAP, COUVA

lmost six decades ago we were released by the British to graze in the pastures under the guise of independence. The country drifted into two irrefutable truths. The first being the emergence of tribalism while the second being the monopoly of the greener pastures by those in power.

Where do we start? The collective action of citizens in Trinidad and Tobago to lend their feet in disgust to the gruesome murder of innocent flowers should be the catalyst for change. There is an old African proverb which states that "When you pray you must also move your feet."

What then should we move our feet against? From time immemorial, we have been bearing the burden

of broken and corrupt institutions. One only has to look at the police service, the judiciary, the health system, national security, education and procurement to find the answers. Despite the many years of petrodollars abundance, the cycle remains the same. Treasury being emptied, powerful pockets being filled, citizens pockets being emptied and not a single person yet being held to account. Intuitional strengthening, transparency and accountability were terms found only in the dictionary. Sadly, we are now paying the ultimate price for our own inaction.

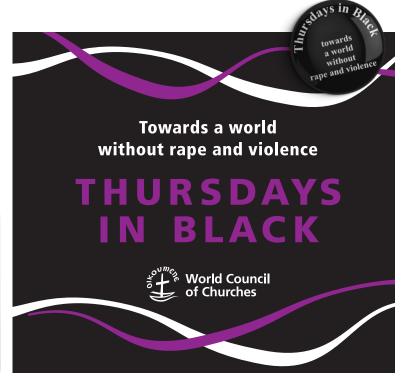
Where then does the answer lie? We must march for reform within all of these institutions – with particular reference to education and family.

WHAT NOW?

The time is upon us when we must ask the hard question – what spawned these criminals? The reality is that we have a generation of fatherless children, unemployed single mothers and a decrepit education system that has turned its back on the most vulnerable children. Children were not born outlaws. Somewhere along the line, we allowed this to happen. We turned a blind eye to the poor governance structure on both sides of the divide driven by our own tribal loyalty. We were mute to the social ills that now engulf us.

Let us then not allow this moment to pass. Only our willingness to engage in open rational bipartisan discourse can bring about the change that is necessary.





THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

VACANCY AT SYNOD'S OFFICE ACCOUNTING ASSISTANT



Applications are kindly invited for the position of Accounting Assistant for Synod.

The Accounting Assistant provides financial and administrative support in order to ensure accurate, effective and efficient financial operations.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Updating of all financial records on a daily/weekly basis using Peachtree.
- 2. Preparation of Bank Reconciliation statements.
- 3. Preparation of Payroll and remittances to the relevant authorities i.e. BIR, NIS, Insurance Agents etc.
- 4. Preparation of Payments via Cheque and Online Banking.
- 5. Preparation of Reports, including, but not limited to, Management & Aged Receivables
- 6. Preparation of weekly Bank Deposits. Conducting all bank business on behalf of the PCTT.
- 7. Daily office procedures typing letters, filing documents, answering phones, making phone calls, photocopying, etc.
- 8. Preparation of Annual Financial Statements and Annual Budget.
- 9. Interfacing with the Internal Auditor as required.
- 10. Liaison for the Insurance operations of the PCTT i.e. Property, Health, Life and Pension.
- 11. Preparation of TD4's and TD1's.
- 12. Assists relevant Boards as necessary.
- 13. Handles all financial queries from Staff, Regions and Boards.
- 14. Any other responsibilities assigned.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

- CAT/AAT or equivalent.
- Training in MS Office Suite Applications.
- Good interpersonal communication and relations.
- Training and experience in the use of Peachtree.
- 3 years' experience as an Accounts Clerk.
- Must be a Confirmed Presbyterian.
- Any combination of relevant training and experience.



A reasonable compensation package: Salary, Health, Life and Pension are offered. Further details can be obtained from the General Secretary of Synod of the PCTT.

The closing date of application is 16th April 2021 @ 4:00 p.m.

A detailed resume, copies of relevant certificates and references should be addressed to: The General Secretary of Synod,

P.O. Box 187, Paradise Hill, San Fernando.

or Emailed to: gs.warde@pctt.org.tt | Telephone: 652-4829 / 653-4788



The Presbyterian Primary Schools' Board of Education Teachers' Conference 2021

HELPING TEACHERS ADJUST TO THE NEW NORMAL

GEETA K. MAHARAJ, PPSBE GENERAL SECRETARY











he Presbyterian Primary Schools' Board of Education (PPSBE) hosted a virtual conference for Presbyterian Primary Schools principals and teachers who are struggling with the reality of a virtual teaching and learning environment in the new normal brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic.

virtual conference was held on Friday 12 March 2021 from 9:00am to 12:00pm on the theme: Teacher Wellness: Staying Grounded. The Conference was opened by Presbyterian Church of Trinidad and Tobago Synod Moderator the Rt. Reverend Joy Abdul-Mohan. Board Chairperson Reverend Brenda Bullock blessed the session, which was chaired by Board Vice-Chairman Allan Ramdeen, PCTT General Secretary Terrence Warde brought greetings from Synod, while Schools Supervisor 11, Kenny Edwin brought greetings on behalf of the Victoria Education District.

Feature speaker Senator Dr. Varma Deyalsingh, a psychiatrist, spoke candidly and realistically about the "fretful daily stressors that impact the holistic wellness of our officers as they operate in the present teaching-learning system". Retired Schools Supervisor Vickram Ramlal explained the guidelines for dealing with alleged Misconduct in the Work Place and the Disciplinary Process as outlined in the Public Service Commission Regulations 83 to 132 and adopted by the Teaching Service Commission.

Reverend Adrian Sieunarine, principal of St Andrews Theological College, spoke about the Spiritual Wellness of the Presbyterian Teacher. Complementing the theme was a Yoga session by Dapiechan Basdeo and an interactive Jerusalema dance session led by Eugene Joseph.

There was an overwhelming positive response from the virtual audience of over 900 viewers on every aspect of the conference's agenda. This pointed to a successful and meaningful event. The PPSBE thanks everyone who contributed to its Teachers' Conference 2021.







NEW LIFE IN CHRIST

MEMORY VERSE

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!
- 2nd Corinthians 5:17

BIBLE STORY

John 3: 1-16

One night, a man came to see Jesus. The man's name was Nicodemus (nik-uh-DEE-muhs). He was a religious man who studied, taught and obeyed God's law. Nicodemus had heard about Jesus, and he wanted to know more from this God-sent Rabbi (RAB-igh) or Teacher. Jesus said to him, "I tell you: Unless someone is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Now Nicodemus was very confused. He thought that keeping all God's Laws was how a person got into heaven!

"How can anyone be born when he is old?" Nicodemus asked Jesus. Jesus said, "I tell you: A man cannot enter God's kingdom unless he is born of water and the Spirit. Whatever is born of the flesh is flesh, and whatever is born of the Spirit is spirit." That means that when a baby is born, we get physical life from our parents but it doesn't last forever. But the Spirit gives people spiritual life so they can live with God forever. Nicodemus still didn't understand and asked, "How is this possible?" Then Jesus told Nicodemus about God's great plan: "God loved the world so much that He sent His One and Only Son to save the world. Everyone who believes in Him will not perish but will have eternal life."

STUDENT DEACONESS AMBER SEESAHAI-PAYNE, SUSAMACHAR PASTORAL REGION

MESSAGE

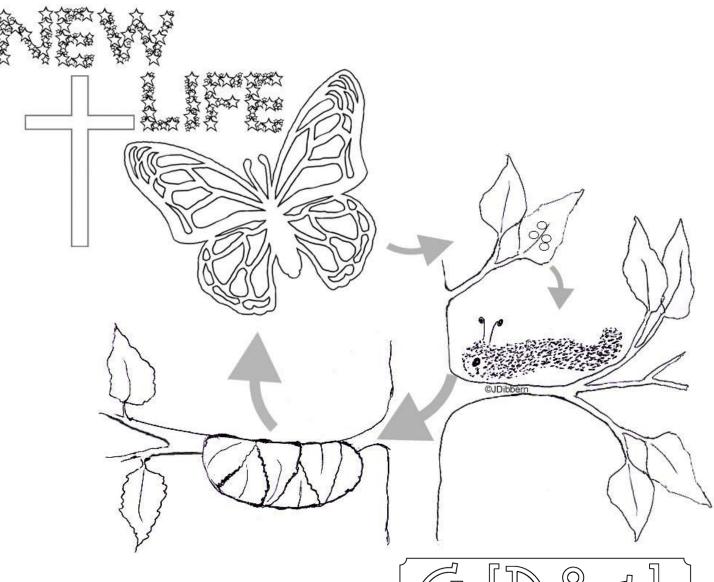
The butterfly is one of the most beautiful things that God has ever created, but it was not always so beautiful. It has four phases during its life: the egg, the caterpillar, the chrysalis (kris-uh-lis) or cocoon, and the butterfly.

At first, the insect begins as an egg. This egg hatches into a fuzzy little caterpillar. Some people may think caterpillars are cute or funny, but no one would say that they are beautiful! Then, one day the caterpillar spins a cocoon about itself and stays there for weeks. From the outside it looks like it's dead, but inside the cocoon wonderful changes are taking place. When the cocoon opens and the butterfly crawls out, it is a new creation. The caterpillar is gone! It's now a butterfly.

Jesus is just like a butterfly! He was born on Earth, showed us how to be good Christians, died on the cross and was buried in a tomb for three days. Then, came to life again to offer hope to everyone who believes and trusts in him!

When we invite Jesus to come into our heart, we become a new creation. Jesus will make you into a new creation if you invite him into your heart. By trusting in Jesus Christ and coming to him and admitting that we know we are sinners, Jesus will forgive us and wipe our sins from us and give us new life!



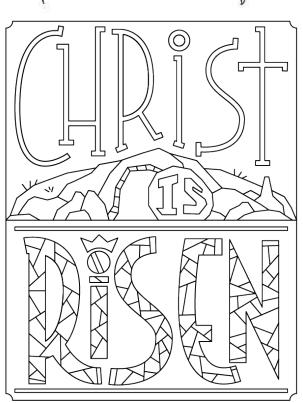


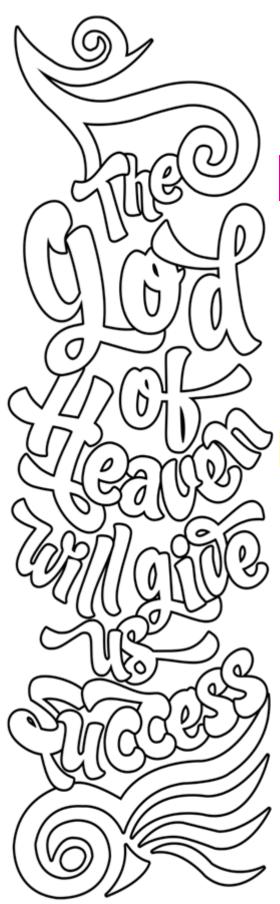
CHALLENGE!

Look into the mirror. SEE YOU! See the beautiful creation you are, and the potential within you!

PRAYER

Dear Lord, we thank you for sending Jesus to die on the cross so that we, like the butterfly, can become a new creation. We ask you to change us and to make us beautiful. Amen.





Nehemiah 2:20



SIMONE SINGH-SAGAR, THE NATIONAL YOUTH COORDINATOR OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

Start UP your Youth Group:

Use the online forums available and bring the youths together.

Of course, it may seem as if there is a whole lot of ONLINE-ING these days – gaming, exams, school, worship – but hey! We need to at least see and hear one another, learn and grow together, pursue a deeper faith in God – so let us start it UPPPP!

The aim of Youth Ministry is to provide an outlet for our youths to relax together and learn about their faith:

- Find an online platform you can use or message me for use of the PCTT National Youth Ministry Zoom account.
- Give your youths part of the agenda – worship/ devotions, games/ icebreakers, bible quizzes

- Come up with ideas that are more than talk – Art Evenings, Virtual Hikes, worship karaoke, prayer sessions, craft moments, videos like Bible Challenges, start recycling programs in your homes/Churches/communities, create a book exchange – Virtual or Physical Library
- Ask your Minister or Deaconess or Student Minister to lead in Bible Studies with focus on a youth related topic
- If you want to meet physically
 please stick to all the Covid guidelines!

NOTE: Volunteer the Youth Group to prepare Mother's Day items in song or gifts.

There is a 5th Sunday in May, so look out for the Worship and Sermon outlines

All Regional and Local Youth Coordinators are asked to send their WhatsApp contact number and



Email Address to the National Youth Coordinator at nyc@pctt.org.tt or pcttnyc@gmail.com, message me also on 320-2543.

Start UP your Self Care:

Hear me out – you gotta love yourself. There is legit only ONE YOU – and you are amazing!

Trust me – depending on others to see your worth, or give you commendations, will leave you stuck. You need to start treating your whole self – MIND, SOUL, BODY, FACE – with as much love as you will give to someone else.

Self love is the most important thing you can learn in your life, in my opinion. You have to learn to be comfortable with yourself to be truly happy, to learn, grow and find contentment!

Try these things for renewal of self, as we lean upon the resurrection power of God:

- Speak affirmations to yourself in a mirror every day – say this for example, while looking at yourself: I AM ENOUGH. I CAN DO ANYTHING. GOD IS WITH ME ALWAYS.
- Do something special for yourself everyday – it doesn't have to cost money or be physical. It can be as simple as breathing deeply, reading a book, exercising, making your favourite meal, wearing a comfy pair of socks.
- Take social media breaks

 the pressure there to
 be and do and post is

 REALLLLL, so switch off and give yourself a break
- Develop a hobby that allows your mind to float and relax
- Feed yourself only the bestfoods, advice, prayer

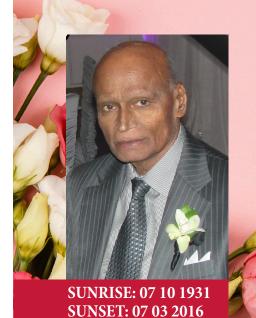


IN LOVING MEMORY

Cyril Gopaul

GONE BUT NOT FORGOTTEN

Always loved. Never forgotten. Always missed. From your loving wife, children, grandchildren, great grandchildren and in-laws



Jairam Sitahal Jagessar

GONE BUT NOT FORGOTTEN

Lovingly remembered by his Wife: Grace Daughters: Ramona & Karen Grandchildren: Jada & Conner Sons-in-law: Michael & Joel In-Laws, family, and friends.

Past Chairman & Elder of the
Trinity Presbyterian Church of the
Marabella/Bonne Aventure Pastoral Region.
He also served on Synod, Synodical Council and
various Boards and Committees of the Presbyterian
Church of Trinidad and Tobago



IN LOVING MEMORY

Josephine Juliana Persadie

GONE BUT NOT FORGOTTEN

Lovingly Remembered by all her family and friends. They know that she is with the angels resting peacefully. She will always be in their hearts



SUNRISE: 25 05 1933 SUNSET: 21 02 2019



GONE BUT NOT FORGOTTEN

Lovingly remembered by his Wife, Fatima (Dolly); Children: Dennis (Sheryl), Glen (Shamo), Maureen (Richard-

Deceased), Ronald (Karen) and Susanne (Kiran). Grandchildren: Ryan (Samara), Lisa (Adriel), Dominic (Stephanie),

Tristan, Kavi, Ketan, Shreeya Ria and Ross. Siblings: (Joyce), Robert (Shirley), Violet (John-Deceased), Harris

> (Meg), Joyce (Leo) and Babsie (Roland). and many more...

SUNRISE: 30 09 1931 SUNSET: 02 06 2020



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DISCLAIMER: The Editoral 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

OTHER

- DIARRHEA
- VOMITTING

ADVANCED CASES

- PNEUMONIA
- RENAL FAILURE

SHORTNESS OF BREATH



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





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 Hotline: 800-7283

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





His Steadfast Love Endures Forever

2021					
SUNDAY		Mark 16:1-8	1 John 1:1 – 2:2	Acts 3:12-19	1 John 3:16-24
MONDAY		John 14:1-14	Daniel 1:1-21	Luke 4:14-30	Jeremiah 30:1-9
TUESDAY		John 14:15-31	Daniel 2:1-16	Luke 4:31-37	Jeremiah 30:10-17
WEDNESDAY		John 15:1-11	Daniel 2:17-30	Luke 4:38-44	Jeremiah 30:18-22
THURSDAY	John 17:1-26	John 15:12-27	Daniel 2:31-49	Luke 5:1-11	Jeremiah 31:1-14
FRIDAY	John 19:38-42	John 16:1-15	1 John 3:1-10	Luke 5:12-26	Jeremiah 31:15-22
SATURDAY	Romans 8:1-11	John 16:16-33	1 John 3:11-18	Luke 5:27-39	