

## A COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF PEC—EWI PROVINCE

# THE INFORMATION

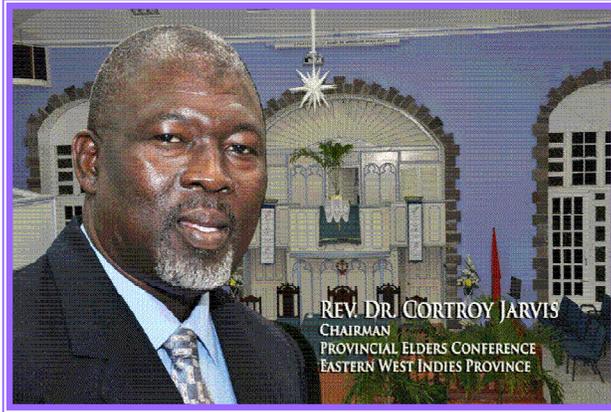
Then the man said, "Let me go, for it is daybreak." But Jacob replied, "I will not let you go unless you bless me." Genesis 32 vs. 26 [NIV]

August, 2010



## Taking a Break From the Lord's Work

In this issue, I share an article which appeared in the New York Times and written by Paul Vitello on August 01, 2010. The article is entitled,



"Taking a break from the Lord's work". I encourage all Staff Members to read, digest and share with as many persons as possible. This is a very appropriate article which was printed on Emancipation day.

At our recently held Provincial Staff Retreat from July 08-13, 2010 in Trinidad, I was taken a

back by the comments of one Staff Member who sought to converse with me. The Staff Member felt that having a Retreat such as the one we had was a burden on the congregation. I got the distinct impression from the Staff Member that Retreats are not necessary. I was disappointed to put it mildly that any congregation would think it difficult to sponsor their Pastor to attend such an important aspect of the Pastor's Ministry.

The Retreat is meant for one to step aside to reflect, relax, rejuvenate, recharge and refocus on the Ministry to which God has called us. I am very much aware that some persons do not know how to relax and could therefore find themselves worn out in a short period of time. Jesus himself, time and again, pulled himself away from the crowd either on a mountain, in a boat, in a quiet place to retreat and recharge his battery for the tasks ahead. Ministers of the gospel are not robots and must therefore take time out to relax, reflect and recharge their batteries for the tasks of the ministry that God has placed in their hands.

Ministry has become more and more complex and more and more demands are being made on the Minister. As Ministers of the gospel, we must take time out to study the word, for prayer, reflection, meditation, relaxation and rejuvenation. Denis Waitley once said, "Failure should be our teacher, not our undertaker. Failure is delay, not defeat. It is a temporary detour, not a dead end. Failure is something we can avoid only by saying nothing, doing nothing, and being nothing". Be Blessed as you read this article.

The findings have surfaced with ominous regularity over the last few years, and with little notice: Members of the clergy now suffer from obesity, hypertension and depression at rates higher than most Americans.

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**PROVINCIAL THEME 2010: PURSUING THE BLESSING**

### 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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In the last decade, their use of antidepressants has risen, while their life expectancy has fallen. Many would change jobs if they could.

For 30 years, Msgr. Gus Bennett, 87, of the Diocese of Brooklyn, has relaxed with camping trips to the Wyoming wilderness.

Rev. Steven Creange of the High Mountain Church of the Nazarene and his wife, Susan, relishes Fridays off.

Public health experts who have led the studies caution that there is no simple explanation of why so many members of a profession once associated with rosy-cheeked longevity have become so unhealthy and unhappy.

But while research continues, a growing number of health care experts and religious leaders have settled on one simple remedy that has long been a touchy subject with many clerics: taking more time off.

“We had a pastor in our study group who hadn’t taken a vacation in 18 years,” said Rae Jean Proeschold-Bell, an assistant professor of health research at [Duke University](#) who directs one of the studies. “These people tend to be driven by a sense of a duty to God to answer every call for help from anybody, and they are virtually called upon all the time, 24/7.”

As cellphones and social media expose the clergy to new dimensions of stress, and as health care costs soar, some of the country’s largest religious denominations have begun wellness campaigns that preach the virtues of getting away. It has been described by some health experts as a sort of slow-food movement for the clerical soul.

In the United Methodist Church in recent months, some church administrators have been contacting ministers known to skip vacation to make sure they have scheduled their time, Ms. Proeschold-Bell said.

The church, the nation’s largest mainline Protestant denomination, led the way with a 2006 directive that strongly urged ministers to take all the vacation they were entitled to — a practice then almost unheard of in some busy congregations.

“Time away can bring renewal,” the directive said, “and help prevent burnout.”

The Episcopal, Baptist and Lutheran churches have all undertaken health initiatives that place special emphasis on the need for pastors to take vacations and observe “Sabbath days,” their week-day time off in place of Sundays.

The Lilly Endowment, a philanthropic foundation based in Indiana, has awarded grants of up to \$45,000 each to hundreds of Christian congregations in the past few years, under a project called the [National Clergy Renewal Program](#), for the purpose of giving pastors extended sabbaticals.

And while recent research has focused largely on mainline Protestant churches, some Jewish leaders have begun to encourage rabbis to take sabbaticals.

“We now recommend three or four months every three or four years,” said Rabbi Joel Meyers, a past executive vice president of the Rabbinical Assembly, the international association of Conservative rabbis. “There is a deep concern about stress. Rabbis today are expected to be the C.E.O. of the congregation and the spiritual guide, and never be out of town if somebody dies. And reply instantly to every e-mail.”

Some nondenominational evangelical Christian ministers have embraced a similar approach, outlined in two best-selling books by the Rev. Peter Scazzero, pastor of the [New Life Fellowship Church](#) in Elmhurst, Queens.

Mr. Scazzero, 54, is the unofficial leader of a growing counterculture among independent pastors who reject the constant-growth ethic that has contributed to the explosion of so-called mega-churches.

In the books, “Emotionally Healthy Spirituality” and “The Emotionally Healthy Church,” he advocates more vacation time for members of the clergy, Sabbath-keeping, and a “rhythm of stopping,” or daily praying, that he learned from the silent order of Trappist monks.

Mr. Scazzero said that depression and alienation from his wife and four children prompted him a half-dozen years ago to try living more consciously and less compulsively.

“It’s hard to lead a contemplative life on Queens Boulevard,” Mr. Scazzero said. “But the insight I gained from the Trappists is that being too ‘busy’ is an impediment to one’s relationship with God.”

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## PRESBYTERIAN CONSECRATIONS

Brother Jeremy Francis, presently serving as pastor of the Estridge and Bethel Moravian congregations in St. Kitts, will be consecrated a Presbyter in the Moravian Church on Sunday September 12, 2010 at 5.00p.m. Bishop Kingsley Lewis will officiate at the service, which will be held at the Estridge Moravian Church, St. Kitts.



## A Reflection of Provincial Staff Retreat 2010

Rev. Bonnie E.B.W. Smith - Antigua Conference

Retreats by their very nature were designed to be times of quiet rest and contemplation in a place of seclusion away from the ordinary into the solitary. The ideal setting for any such recoil for me are lush gardens where sanctuaries of birds reside; whose choral concerts are endless and blends majestically with the sound of water running or waves breaking. Such an atmosphere is conducive to clearly hearing the voice of God calling, consoling, chastising, cultivating and caring. This retreat to a great extent was ideal. It offered a connection with nature which is priceless, an encounter with the self which is necessary, a closer and more critical view of others and deep endearing moments with God.



Brother Adrian Smith, presently serving as Pastor of the Cana and Gracehill Moravian Churches in Antigua, will be consecrated a Presbyter in the Moravian Church on Sunday September 19, 2010 at 6.00p.m. Bishop Kingsley Lewis will officiate at the Service, which will be held at the Spring Gardens Moravian

Church, Antigua.

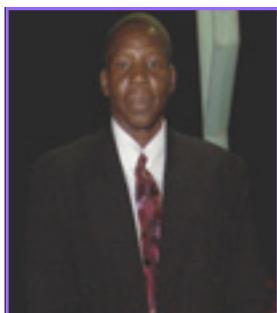
Brother Junior Sean Roberts, presently serving as Associate Pastor of the Spring Gardens Moravian congregation in Antigua, will be consecrated a Presbyter in the Moravian Church on Sunday September 19, 2010 at 6.00p.m. Bishop Kingsley Lewis will officiate at the Service, which will be held at the Spring Gardens Moravian Church, Antigua.



The discussions facilitated by our presenter, Canon Claude Berkley were unorthodoxly provocative and weighed heavily on the academic, evoking bouts of abstract discussion by those whose scholastic prowess were whet. His clever, yet deliberate way of pointing us back to the book of choice, "Who moved my Cheese" by Spencer Johnson, incited an engagement into "Cheese Theology"; a theology which is based on discerning change and making critical responses to change without losing sight of God. Though we see the evidence of change all around which demands appropriate adaptation, we like "Hem" refuse to let go of the comfortable and familiar to therefore embrace the revised methods of presenting the Gospel in a changing world. Many of us continue to dwell in denial casting aspersions on those who would have embraced change. This retreat more than any other that I would have attended within the Moravian Church has awakened me to the reality that if our Church is to remain relevant we have to become more contextual in our worship and our witness; yes, we have to become comfortable with change!

In deeper reflections I wrestle with the blatant fact that so many of us are battered and bruised and are pining away because of bitterness and unresolved issues.

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Brother Andrew Roberts, presently serving as Associate Pastor of the Centenary, Clifton Hill and Fulnec Pastorate, with responsibility for Fulnec Moravian congregation in Barbados, will be consecrated a Presbyter in the Moravian Church on Thursday September 30, 2010 at 7.30p.m. Bishop Kingsley Lewis will officiate at the Service which will be

held at the Sharon Moravian Church, Barbados.

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“And one shall say to him, ‘What are these wounds in your hands?’ Then he shall answer, ‘Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends’.” (Zechariah 13:6) Where can we go if those with whom we rub shoulders with, toiling for the kingdom are the ones destroying us? It seemed we became uncomfortable when the truth was so eloquently expressed by Rev. Julie Joefield-Parris on two occasions while in retreat that the trust factor continues to impede our catharsis. Perhaps this is why our retreats remain regrettably on the surface and fall short of their true liberating potential as we hinder our deliverance with the heavy burdens we carry. It seems we find safety in hiding behind abstract terms rather than emptying ourselves by removing the masks (Fig leaves) and lay naked and unashamed in the presence of our sisters and brothers who should be reservoirs of help rather than cisterns of hurt.

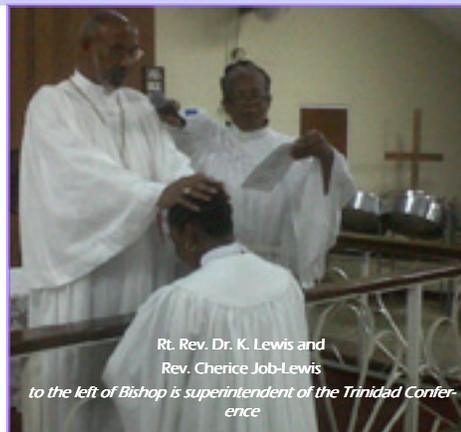
As a final point of reflection, when planning for future retreats it may be of worth to consider a venue outside of the Province. In so doing we would provide all Ministers with an equal opportunity to reflect, relax, and be refreshed, rather than burdening any one Conference with the task of hosting such an event and leaving respective Ministers too near to those regular responsibilities from which they should retreat.

I do long for the day when we can come away from Staff Retreat saturated with the renewing, releasing and reviving power of the Holy Spirit. Yet, I am mindful that this will be realized as we, by grace, continue to be open to the leading of God’s Spirit who calls us to personal submission and prayerful preparation, and empowers us for sincere fellowship and faithful service.



Rev. Cherice Job-Lewis

The Rev. Cherice Job-Lewis was ordained to the Diaconate of the Moravian Church on July 16, 2010 at the Tunapuna Methodist Church, Trinidad at 6.00p.m. Rev Job-Lewis is the Pastor of the Buccoo and Black Rock Congregations in Tobago.



### **REFLECTION ON OUR RETREAT**

*Rev. Esther Moore Roberts - Tobago Conference*



Having spent that week in retreat mode, we are tempted to say like the disciples on the Mount of Transfiguration, “Lord, let us set up our homes right here!” The ambiance of Salybia with its constant, tranquil ocean breezes, the panoramic view, friendly staff and tasty meals was an

exciting experience. The villas neatly dug into the hills were very clean and comfortable and encouraged the quietness needed to rest, relate, pray and reflect. Thanks to the PEC for a schedule which gave sufficient time to do all those things. The preachers and Presenter were very well-researched, thought-provoking in content and vibrant in their delivery and kept us focused on being pursued by a purposeful God who wants to bless us.

Our only disappointment was the brevity and apparent lack of direction for the PEC/Staff discussion session. Much more could have been done to call our attention to our weak areas and point us to more specific ways to being that church which is “transformed, united and victorious in Christ”.

However, the aroma of worship, prayers, confessions, petitions and supplications rose up, sweet and spiritually

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enriching and the glory of the Lord was truly in that place. The Tobago Conference wants to register its sincere thanks to the Trinidad Conference for the great planning and implementation of our retreat.

### **Reflections On Provincial Staff Retreat**

*Rev. Winston Jones – Barbados Conference*

The challenge of ministering as a servant of Jesus has been, for me, revitalized and renewed after experiencing the 2010 Provincial Staff Retreat in the Playa Del Este Sanctuary Private Resort.

Every opportunity to relax in Trinidad I welcome because of the wonderful diversity of its culture, but this diversity was left behind during the pleasant drive to the Resort. The setting of the resort is most idyllic.

Carved into the hillside of Salybia, the setting was ideal for relaxation and the opening and freeing of the mind, made all the more easy by the picturesque view of the ocean from wherever you find yourself in the Resort.

The food was delightfully 'Trini', from the bus-up-shut, down to the bul-jol and fried bake. Kudos to the chef and to the staff of servers who served up the fine 'fare' with professionalism and warm 'Trini-Caribbean' smiles. The juices offered with each meal were refreshing and cold and reflected the variety of drinks for which Trinidad has earned a reputation, albeit all our drinks were soft. The only challenge expressed by some of our more hearty eaters was portion size, but based on the empty plates removed from the tables and the pleasant dispositions for the entire retreat, I am guessing quality adequately compensated for quantity.

The Anglican Canon Claude Berkley, in a disarming yet engaging manner, walked us gently into the depths



of discussing the topic, "Pursued and Pursuing", selected as the theme of the Retreat. Using humour, provocative statements and open-ended questions, Canon Berkley painted on the canvass of our ready minds, a portrait of Caribbean Theological discourse hidden just beneath the consciousness of our Caribbean reality, calling upon the theological tools and techniques employed by the luminaries of theological debate (Mcquarrie, et al), yet managing to fashion these tools to be truly adept for our Caribbean enquiry today.

This cook-up pot of serenity, rich Caribbean Theological insight, provocative investigation of our theme and proportionate blend of structured sessions for discussion and reflection and time for rest, relaxation and fellowship, created an invitation to draw near to God with our brothers and sisters, and draw near we did. The Retreat climaxed with an awesome period of intimacy with our Lord, Jesus the Christ. The Retreat would have been incomplete had the Holy Spirit not shared such a moment of revealed presence with us. He chose the Cup of Covenant, and as He led His session with us, as He does when He makes His presence felt, the warmth of the spiritual intimacy that He causes, was most evident.

The litmus test on the worth and impact of a retreat for me is how I feel and how revived I am afterward. This one gets four (4) out of five (5) stars (I held one back because It ended too quickly. 🙌👍)

### **Reflections On Provincial Staff Retreat**

*Rev. Nasel Ephraim – St. Kitts Conference*

Pursued and Pursuing! As a people do we like to feel as if we are being pursued or do we prefer to be doing the pursuing? It's only human nature that we



would much prefer to be pursuing others. However, it is imperative that ever so often in life we allow ourselves to be pursued – not necessarily by man but DEFINITELY by God. After we have allowed ourselves to be pursued by God, caught, and transported to freedom; then we can permit ourselves to begin pursuing others.

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Over the period 8 – 13 July 2010, the staff of the Moravian Church, Eastern West Indies Province assembled at the Playa Del Este Sanctuary Private Resort, Salybia, Trinidad for retreat. The Resort provided the perfect atmosphere and ambience. The Retreat provided the opportunity for us to rejuvenate and to return to our several Conferences and various congregations refreshed and recommitted to being pursuers for Christ.

The sessions were timely and appropriate. I was able to gain insight into the realisation that ministry cannot be monotonous or stagnant but needs to be vibrant and dynamic. It was reinforced that change is the only constant and as such I should be flexible and trusting but never become gullible. As a minister of religion it is fundamentally important that I continue being faithful to the call. I was reminded that in ministry I need to remain firm and focused.

Retreat 2010 was good, however, I am of the opinion that more time should have allocated for corporate soul searching. The sessions were encouraging and provided us with ammunition to continue the job of being pursued by God and pursuing souls for the Kingdom.

**R**efreshing  
**E**nlightening  
**T**imely  
**R**ejuvenated  
**E**ncouraging  
**A**ppropriate  
**T**ransforming

*Continued from page 2**Taking a Break from the Lord's work*

Clergy health studies say that many clerics have “boundary issues” — defined as being too easily overtaken by the urgency of other people's needs.

Dr. Gwen Wagstrom Halaas, a family physician who is married to a Lutheran minister and who wrote a 2004 book raising the alarm about clergy health (“The Right Road: Life Choices for Clergy”), described the problem as a misperception about serving God.

“They think that taking care of themselves is selfish, and that serving God means never saying no,” she said.

Larger social trends, like the aging and shrinking of congregations, the dwindling availability of volunteers in the era of two-income households, and the likelihood that a male pastor's wife has a career of her own, also spur some ministers to push themselves past their limits, she said.

The High Mountain Church of the Nazarene in North Haledon, N.J., started with 25 members 10 years ago and grew to 115 before its pastor, the Rev. Steven Creange, noticed strains in his marriage and decided to slow down.

Mr. Creange said he and his wife feel lavishly rested — and much happier — since they began observing Sabbath days on Fridays and making occasional weekend getaways.

“I just don't go to every graduation and every communion anymore,” he said. “And people accept it.”

In May, the Clergy Health Initiative, a seven-year study that Duke University began in 2007, published the first results of a continuing survey of 1,726 Methodist ministers in North Carolina. Compared with neighbors in their census tracts, the ministers reported significantly higher rates of arthritis, diabetes, high blood pressure and asthma. Obesity was 10 percent more prevalent in the clergy group.

The results echoed recent internal surveys by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, which found that 69 percent of its ministers reported being overweight, 64 percent having high blood pressure and 13 percent taking antidepressants.

A 2005 survey of clergy by the Board of Pensions of the Presbyterian Church also took special note of a quadrupling in the number of people leaving the profession during the first five years of ministry, compared with the 1970s.

Roman Catholic and Muslim clerics said the symptoms sounded familiar.

“We have all of these problems, but imams are reluctant to express it because it will seem like a sign of weakness,” said Imam Shamsi Ali, director of the Jamaica Muslim Center in Queens. “Also, mosques do not pay much and many of them work two jobs.”

Catholic canon law requires priests — “unless there is a grave reason to the contrary” — to take a spiritual retreat each year, and four weeks of vacation.

That vacation regulation has led Msgr. Gus Bennett of Brooklyn to take a camping trip on horseback in the Wyoming wilderness with friends every year for 30 years.

Monsignor Bennett, 87, a canon lawyer, now semi-retired, who spent most of his working years setting up and managing the pension plan for priests and lay employees of the Diocese of Brooklyn, says he has always felt his religious side to be most alive during those nights in Wyoming, “sleeping on the ground, under the whole of creation.”

He does not know how it affected his health. “I just know it made it easier to come back and jump into the books,” he said.

2<sup>nd</sup> International Women’s Conference  
July 21-25, 2010



Guyana  
**“Celebrating Christian Womanhood”**  
 Rev. J. Joefield-Parris  
 Provincial Director of  
 Christian Education (PDCE)

The second Women’s Conference hosted by the Guyana Moravian Women’s Council was held from July 21 – 25 at the St Paul’s Retreat Centre in Vryheid’s Lust, East Coast Demerara. There were approximately 60 women in attendance with a strong representation from the EWI Province

Overseas delegates were greeted at arrival and shuttled to the Conference site. There were many challenges with travelling times as well as the traditional ‘lost luggage’ scenario, however once the programme began to unfold there was no time to consider the ‘trivials’.

The opening service was held at the Queenstown Moravian Church and the guest speaker challenged participants as to the aspects of Christian Womanhood.

Despite the mosquitoes (a couple on your plate could be a healthy portion size however questionable the source of protein); the rain; the challenges with the length of time in travelling to the different points of Guyana, the fellowship was warm, the programme was insightful, rich and rewarding.

Participants from  
**The Eastern West Indies Province  
 to the Guyana Women’s Conference:**

- Antigua:** Jean Charles, Sara Davis, Cora Tongue
- Barbados:** Roslyn Hamblin, Julie Joefield-Parris, Marlene Folkes-Griffith, Beverly Haynes-Gay
- Tobago:** Olga Baird-Joefield, Petronella Archer, Sherma David, Lou Redman, Gwendolyn Sealey
- Trinidad:** Binta Mgonela, Onita Samuel, Dionne Carmichael, Cheryl Vlarke, Phyllis Davis, Gladys Henry-Thompson, Angela Johnson, June Mcmillan, Ivy Thompson, Marilyn Warner, Donna Young Clarke
- USVI:** Eulencine Christopher, Doris Williams



**Birthday Greetings for the Month of August  
 is extended to:**

- Bro. Romeo Challenger 12
- Sis. Winelle Kirton-Roberts 20
- Bro. Reuben Vessup 22
- Sis. Anique Elmes-Matthew 22
- Bro. Conrad Spencer 29
- Sis. Angela Frederick 30



**Anniversary Greetings for the month of August  
 is extended to:**

- Bro. Winston & Sis. Bernadine Chase 12
- Bro. Matthew & Sis. Jasmin Crooks 13
- Bro. Selvin & Sis. June McMillan 20
- Bro. Leon & Sis. Mabel Matthias 28
- Bro. Dion & Sis. Eulencine Christopher 29