

A COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR OF PEC EWI PROVINCE



The Information

To equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ. Ephesians 4: 12-13

Why Church



Rev. Algernon Lewis
Chairman of PEC

Pentecost Sunday is May 28. Pentecost is the birthday of the institutional church. The church was born in power, fire, and the impartation of the Holy Spirit. Reading the recount in Acts 2 calls readers to imagine the chaos, the bewilderment, and the pure joy of being where God is manifestly present. No one knew what was happening or what to expect. The descent of the Holy Spirit turned everything around. Rather than just a group of people following a man who was killed and came back to life and then disappeared, they were now an organization or an organism. They now had a mission and a mandate to follow and a passion for both.

Fast forward to 2023, is the church still a necessary part of society? Do we really need the church in its current iteration? Someone may be thinking it is sacrilege to ask such questions. However, with increasing declining attendance at worship and declining membership, it seems that more people are thinking and acting in ways that suggest that they do not need the church. Whatever regular church members think about that perspective, it is the reality. Therefore, we need to ask questions about the relevance or usefulness of the church in the current context.

This article aims to answer the question of why the church is needed today. As you read this article, think about your answer to the question. What does the church do that no one else does well in society? Most of the responses I have heard mention things that are done well by other sections of society. The church needs to know why it exists so that we can ensure that we make the main thing the main thing. In my view, the church is needed because Jesus said so; because it is intended to be the space for orthodox spiritual formation; and because it is God's chosen agent for the building of beloved community.

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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, Evangelist discipleship and service.

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Because Jesus said so

When we are dealing with the church, our actions must be founded in the plan and purpose of Jesus. The church is Jesus's plan for the world. Matthew 16:18 is clear – "and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it." Whatever our thoughts are about the church, we must begin here – Jesus says that he will build his church. This statement also clearly announces that Jesus sees that the church has relevance in society. The value of the church to Jesus is underscored by the various metaphors used to describe the church in scripture – the body of Christ (Ephesians 4:12), the bride of Christ (Ephesians 5: 22-33, Revelation 21:2), the household of faith, and God's building (Romans 12:4-5, Ephesians 2:19-22).

These metaphors speak to how the church should operate in the divine and natural economy. The church – corporate and individual – needs to drill down into what Jesus said about the church and recalibrate how we go about the work of the church. Far too often, the organization takes precedence. Far too often, the perspectives and ideas of leaders, official and unofficial, tradition, and trends carry more weight than what God says about the church. The headship or Chief-Eldership is Jesus must sit in our meetings and planning sessions to filter the courses we ultimately take. As a leader, I know it is easy to forget or neglect the unique nature of this Spirit-formed organism. However, Pentecost is the opportunity to take another look and ensure that we are properly aligned with what Jesus said about the church.

Because it is intended to be a space for Orthodox Spiritual Formation

Sometimes it is lost on the church that Jesus inaugurated a completely different system of occupying space in the world. The Sermon on the Mount is the manifesto of the Kingdom of God. It does not read like any other document or holy book. It is a unique expression of the ways of God. Bless those who curse you, go the extra mile, turn the other cheek – they make no worldly sense and that makes perfect sense because the church is only in the world, not of

the world. Our core values have divine origin and while they do not fit the immediate context, they are needed to keep the fabric of society livable. For all the ills of Christianity with its complicity with the powers that be to oppress and enslave, the values of Christianity propagated by the church brought a respect for human flourishing that was not present before. The work of propagating human flourishing is a work in progress as the circle widens.

The church is needed to teach those values of the kingdom as taught by the sermon on the mount. They are fundamental to our identity as Christ-followers. We get other things right at times but when the fundamentals are missing, the gaps are obvious, and we are soon labeled as hypocrites. The church gets the opportunity to introduce people to the ways of Jesus. We get the opportunity to help people to regain the image of God in them that has been tarnished by sin. We get the opportunity to help people focus on the values of the kingdom and not just the power of the kingdom. There is teaching about powerful prayer, casting out demons, prosperity, and other catchy topics. Whereas those things are great, teaching on a transformed heart is overlooked. Jesus came to change our hearts not just to make us powerful. The church is needed to help people be transformed inside first and then have other things added.

Because it is God's agent for building beloved community

This brings me to the final reason for the church. The church is needed because it is God's chosen agent for building beloved community. It is my conviction that the value of community is too often overlooked. Acts 2: 42-47 is a glowing testimony of what God intended. There we see the church reaching out to meet people where they are and embracing them with the love of Jesus. Beloved community is marked by hospitality and generosity which are sparingly served in our churches. When we look at the early church with all its flaws, it was a community that embraced people and shared itself with them. God so loved the world that he gave... God loves the individual into community because iron sharpens iron. The church survived the hostilities of the past because they had each other. There is power in community.

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The witness of Scripture is that God calls individuals for the sake of the community. Abraham, Moses, the prophets, the disciples, Paul, and Jesus, were all called out to go back to community to be agents of the living God. In community, our witness is formed and perfected. Within community, we practice what it means to live for Jesus. When people are exposed to that community, even when there is not a direct verbal witness, the examples are so powerful that it does the work. It was the community of the early church that helped the church to reach its community. The way of Jesus was counter-cultural and counter-intuitive so it did the evangelistic work. The light shone in the darkness and made Jesus known to the wider community.

In community, we get to bear one another's burdens. In community, we get to encourage the weary. In community, we get to disciple each other. In community, our youth and every other category of members can be ministered to. When we build the community of faith, the atmosphere is created for the Spirit of God to move. When the Spirit of God moves, everything is possible. Everywhere in Scripture where the people are together in community, great things happen whether it was Babel or Pentecost or the early church. When all of us come together, we can do so much more. Let us give community building within the institutional church another look to see what God sees – the tool to change the world (I will build my church-kingdom community). I am convinced that if our communities were better, we would reach more people.

Building community is hard. The devil fights our efforts to get together because the devil knows the power of togetherness.

Conclusion

These are my three “whys” for the church in the world – because Jesus said so, because it is the place for orthodox spiritual formation, and because it is the agent for building community. What do you think? It would be good to hear your thoughts on this. May Pentecost 2023 begin a renewed sense of our identity as the church and how we might better live into what it means to be the church in this season.

When we asked Americans whether they have a positive or negative opinion of Jesus, seven in 10 (71%) say they view him positively. Of all U.S. teens and adults, 63 percent say they have made a personal commitment to Jesus Christ that is still important in their life today. This is actually most common among Millennials, of whom 70 percent say their commitment to Jesus is still important to them. Overall, the percentage of Americans who agree with this statement has declined fewer than 10 percentage points over the last 20 years (which is less of a decline than what is observed with other Barna faith metrics like church attendance).

Beyond Jesus, when it comes to views of other Christian groups or entities, positive opinions wane. People of no faith are neutral or leaning negative—and for celebrity, mega- or famous representatives of the faith, opinions are decidedly negative.

Among those of no faith, even Christian individuals are not viewed so favorably. Further, the data below shows why people may be reluctant to hold Christian beliefs, with the top reason today being “hypocrisy of religious people.”

This isn't to say that, at a surface level, present-day Christianity doesn't have a welcome presence in the U.S. It is typically seen as respected, principled, loving, friendly, generous and so on. More telling than these general descriptions, however, are the glaring disparities between how Christians and those of no faith regard Christianity. These gaps represent the hurdles the Church needs to overcome, especially if sharing faith or welcoming people into churches is the goal.

Some of the biggest differences appear when it comes to how much less likely people of no faith are to call Christianity a faith they respect (15%), and how much more likely they are than Christians to describe the faith as judgmental (48%) and hypocritical (49%).

Our data on the rising spiritual openness in America reveals a tremendous opportunity for faith leaders.

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MORAVIAN WOMEN RECOMMIT TO THEIR HERITAGE

The Women's Fellowship of the Moravian Church in Barbados took its membership, family, friends and the public on an exciting and fun-filled Heritage Tour and Treasure Hunt across Barbados on Saturday, March 25, 2023. The tour, which started at the Calvary Moravian Church, included stops at historical and present-day Moravian sites and served to educate those participating of the long and valuable heritage and traditions of the Moravian Church. The President, Sis. Anthea Barrow, indicated that this initiative was timely, especially as it was one of the first full events since the relaxation of Covid-19 protocols.

The event was used, in International Women's Month 2023, to reenergize Women and remind them of the excellent work they had done over the years, and of what needs to be done to assist the wider society in addressing some of the challenges faced during the pandemic, through God given responses. Sis. Barrow posited that the Church had a critical role in shaping the future for the citizenry and that Women's organizations were key to catalyzing those initiatives, whilst collaborating with males across the board and at every juncture. Sis. Barrow noted that schools established by the Moravian Church were visited, given that the church was instrumental in the creation of educational opportunities for the slaves prior to Emancipation, when both children and adults benefitted from day and night school. There are many successful and prominent Barbadians who were recipients of a Moravian education. She further highlighted that the wider society needed to be more respectful of the church and its beliefs and avoid decimating its properties.

Given the rich history of the Moravian Church, the purpose of the heritage tour and treasure hunt was a reminder to all present of the role the Moravians have played in education and religion in Barbados and to embrace the legacy of our ancestors.



Photo of the touring group at Sharon Moravian Church, the first Moravian Church established in Barbados.

Provincial Board Meeting

The Provincial Elders' Conference will meet from May 24-28, 2023 in the Barbados Conference. Your prayers are requested as we deliberate on significant matters before the Province while also interacting with members of the Barbados Conference.



Jesus vs. the Church continued from page 3

The challenge facing the Church is whether they are ready and able to meet the spiritually open—where they are, as they are.

“The work of Christians is to embody Jesus—full of truth and grace—and reflect his image in all they say and do,” says David Kinnaman, CEO of Barna Group. “The data shows they too often fall short.”

Edited and reprinted from <https://www.barna.com/research/openness-to-jesus/>



Quote of the Day

Neighbour is not he whom I find in my path, but rather he in whose path I place myself, he whom I approach and actively seek.

Gustavo Gutiérrez

Children's Activity Corner Faith in the Son of God



John tells us how to show our love for God.

In each pair of words, circle the letter that appears in the first word, but not in the second. Write the letters at the bottom of each column to learn how we show our love for God.

BOAST	___	STAB
DUMB	___	MUD
TEAR	___	RAT
TRAY	___	ART
___	___	___

THIS	___	SIT
TRAIN	___	RANT
STONE	___	NOTE
___	___	___

MARCH	___	HARM
SOUGHT	___	THUGS
CAMPER	___	CRAPE
DREAM	___	READ
RAISE	___	SIRE
SANDAL	___	SALAD
CANDLE	___	LANCE
CRASH	___	CHAR
___	___	___



Birthday Celebrants May 15-31

Sis. Cletus Bowers-Jones	21
Sis. Deborah Challenger	27
Bro. Daniel Mark	31



Birthday Celebrants June 1- 15

Sis. Stacey Herbert-Mannix	02
Bro. Nigel Daniel	05
Sis. Sharon McCardy-Joseph	05
Bro. Charles Peters	07
Sis. Rena Warner-Francis	11



Wedding Anniversary Celebrants May 15—31 & June 01-15



Bro. Edgar & Sis. Angela Frederick-Barriero	25
Bro. David & Sis Cherryann Ince	26
Bro. Reuben & Sis. Ivy Vessup	01



Ordination Anniversaries

Bro. Erflin Browne	June 03, 2001
Bro. Ulric V. Smith II	June 08, 2003
Bro. Vankys Isaac	June 02, 2006
Sis. Bonnie E.B.W. Smith	June 08, 2010
Sis. Judy Winspeare-Philip	June 12, 2022



The Provincial family celebrates with Rev. Kevin St. Hill and his wife, Dr. Shanele Chase-St. Hill at the birth of their son, Justice Kai St. Hill on April 29, 2023 in Barbados. Both mom and baby are doing well.

Please pray for the St. Hill family as they celebrate this new birth. May the Spirit of God continue to keep them.



Congratulations

The Provincial Board extends heartiest congratulations to the Rev. Nevin Lewis was awarded A Doctor of Ministry Degree in pastoral care and counselling from the New Brunswick Theological Seminary in New Jersey. His thesis was entitled: ***"The impact of pre-marital counselling on marital satisfaction"*** of which he passed his defense with Distinction.

The Graduation will be held on May 20, 2023.



A Tribute to Mothers

Mother

*In her eyes the look of loving,
In her smile the warmth of caring.
In her hands the touch of comfort,
In her heart the gift of sharing.*
-UNKNOWN-

Lord, let our facial expressions and our touch
radiate love, concern and comfort, and our
heart pour out generosity and kindness. Amen.



ALL the words listed below are in this “**Golden Rule**” puzzle - left, right, up, down or diagonally. Find each word and click its first letter then its last letter to highlight it. After you have found all the words, click the leftover letters to form the **Mystery Answer**.

Blessings,	Kindness,	Plank,
Coat,	Luke,	Poor,
Commandment,	Mark,	Praise,
Community,	Mercy,	Pray,
Curses,	Money,	Receive
Disciples,	Most High God,	Reward,
Do Good,	Needy,	Shirt,
Father,	New Command,	Sinners,
Followers,	Numbers,	Sons of God,
Forgive,	Others,	Speck,
Friendship,	People,	Thankful,
Golden Rule,	Perfect,	Virtue,
Jesus,	Persecute,	Warnings

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



- In the Book of Genesis, God says, “This is the sign of the covenant I have established between me and all life on the Earth.” What was the sign?
(A) Rainbow
(B) Ring of fire
(C) Shooting star
(D) Giant hand making the peace sign
- What was God’s response when Abram asked, “Sovereign Lord, how can I know that I will gain possession of it?”
(A) The Lord said, “Bring me a heifer”
(B) God sent an earthquake
(C) The Lord sent an angel to Abram
(D) The Lord said, “Seriously?”
- According to Jesus in the Gospel of Mark, who knows when the end times are going to happen?
(A) Jesus
(B) Angels in Heaven
(C) The Father
(D) The Internet knows
- In the Gospel of Luke the Bible says, “Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to Jesus, “Teacher, rebuke your disciples!” What does Jesus say will cry out if they are silent?
(A) The Heavens
(B) All the stones
(C) All the Angels
(D) Everyone would burst out in song like a musical
- Who was chosen to replace Judas and join as one of the twelve disciples?
(A) Matthias
(B) James
(C) Bartholomew
(D) Chris
- Who in the Bible is mentioned being “the greatest man among all the people of the East”?
(A) Paul
(B) John the Baptist
(C) Job
(D) Jesus
- In which book of the Bible does it say, “All the tables are covered with vomit and there is not a spot without filth.”?
(A) Isaiah
(B) Zephaniah
(C) Lamentations
(D) Revelation
- Which person in the Bible only cut his hair once a year, and then only because it was so heavy – “When he weighed it out, it came to five pounds!”?
(A) Samson
(B) Absalom
(C) Marduk
(D) Rapunzel
- Which person in the Bible does it say “his hair grew like the feathers of an eagle and his nails like the claws of a bird”?
(A) Solomon
(B) Nebuchadnezzar
(C) Saul
(D) Big Bird
- Who does the Bible say the Lord’s name for him is “Terror on Every Side”?
(A) The devil
(B) Jeremiah
(C) Pashhur
(D) Dr. Evil

Moravian Multipurpose Complex

Conference Center & Apartments



Conferences

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 over-looking 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 cable TV. All utilities are included with the exception of telephone.



Sermon on Mount

Mystery Answer

- | | | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. A. Genesis 9: 16-17(NIV) | 2. A> Genesis 15: 8-9(NIV) | 3. C. Mark 13: 32 | 4. B. Luke 19: 39-40 (NIV) |
| 5. A. Acts 1: 23-26 (NIV) | 6. C. Job 1: 1-3 (NIV) | 7. A. Isaiah 28: 8(NIV) | 8. B. 2 Samuel 14: 25-26(NLT) |
| 9. B. Daniel 4:33(NIV) | 10. C. Jeremiah 20:1-3(NIV) | | |

Bible Trivia Answers

SHIFT: RECLAIMING OUR IDENTITY, RENEWING OUR PURPOSE, AND RE-IGNITING OUR PASSION