



CBF Notes



From the President's Desk A Christmas Message



Rev. Dr. William L. Thompson

Season's Greetings.

I greet my Caribbean Baptist family in the precious name of Jesus.

Time with its fleeting feet has brought us once again to the end of another year, and the celebrations of the Yuletide Season.

My prayer is that as we celebrate this great Christian event, we will experience the nearness of Christ not just for a day but throughout our earthly sojourn. Let us always remember Christ wants to be with us always - at home, in our hearts, in our nights of needs and our days of joy.

The Glory of Christ is felt in the love and care that we give to one another not just at Christmas but throughout the rhythms of the year.

My family, as we celebrate, let us be reminded of the sufferings of our Haitian brothers and sisters. This is a nation that has been battered by both natural and man-made catastrophes. Our brothers and sisters are desperately trying to overcome the

tragedies of the January earthquake; the current out-break of Cholera, the recent impact of Tropical Storm Tomas and the present political unrest.

I am aware that Haiti is not the only Caribbean country facing serious challenges at this time, but given the extent of their sufferings I cannot help but singling them out. We will continue to work assiduously to support all Caribbean nations who are experiencing various challenges. The harsh reality is that the economy in our region has been seriously challenged in-part due to the global economic down turn.

Once again I urge you my Brothers and Sisters that while we pray for each other, let us pool our financial resources in order to empower CBF to respond to the needs of our Caribbean nations.

While the commercial world- which has hyped and hawked Christmas for weeks-will soon lose its glitter, we Christians are just beginning a season of celebrations. The coming of Jesus Christ does not give us simply one night to rejoice, but a lifetime to reflect on God's decision to leap down from Heaven and make a home with us.

This is the true meaning of Christmas - the giv-

ing of Jesus Christ, God's gift to us which is more wonderful than the tinsel-wrapped gifts we have come to expect at Christmas. By sending His only Begotten Son into this world, God has imparted to us boundless hope in His Promises, a Peace that passes all understanding, joy in His Grace and Forgiveness, and Warmth of His abiding Love.

May your Christmas be truly meaningful!

From the EST's desk

The need for unity and cooperation among Baptists in the Caribbean region is becoming more and more urgent. The attitude of parochialism, provincialism and insularity is fast becoming extinct in a global world. God has created us not as isolated individuals but as people in community. The CBF as a community of God's people continues to stand in solidarity with those from the

region who have suffered at the hands of natural disasters and mediate the love of Christ in practical ways.

As we celebrate the birth of Christ, let us hear the cries of suffering humanity and proclaim the hope that is associated with the Christ child. This hope is not blind optimism or passive resignation. It is rather active engagement for the transformation of

CBF Notes...

A new way to stay in touch.

We will need your help. Here is what you can do...

- > Distribute this as widely as possible.
- > Post on your church's bulletin board.
- > Send contributions about what is happening at your church.
- > Join our mailing list.
- > Pray for us.

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communion, language and race. We are united by our common belief in the facticity of the birth of Christ. Shalom!!!



CBF News

CBF SALUTES REV. PETER PINDER

“Worthy servants act responsibly, making themselves a present to God – Here I am, I am a present, I am available.”

So said former CBF president, the Rev. Dr Burchell Taylor. It was the occasion of the appreciation service to honour former CBF Executive Secretary-Treasurer, Rev. Peter Pinder.



Rev. Dr. Taylor

In his sermon to a large congregation at Zion Baptist Church in Freeport, The Bahamas, on October 29, 2010, Dr Taylor highlighted elements that mark a worthy servant. Using Isaiah 6:8-9, he said that worthy servants act responsibly in making themselves present to God [every genuine ministry begins with persons making themselves present to God]. Worthy servants practice the presence of God [building and cultivating the things that keep them in the presence of God]. Worthy servants are present for God [we are engaged in the process of bringing honour to God]. After a riveting sermon, Taylor said, “Tonight, we rejoice in the life of a man ... ‘Here I am’. ... Go!”

Rev. Peter Pinder who is the pastor of Zion Baptist Church, Freeport, served the CBF for 15 years as its Executive Secretary-Treasurer (EST). By virtue of that position, he also represented the Caribbean region as Regional Secretary in the Baptist World Alliance (BWA) for the said period. The worship service, at which Rev. Pinder was honoured marked the culmination of two days of CBF Executive Meetings and a Think Tank workshop. A number of CBF Executive members and delegates who were present for the meetings also took part in the service. The service was led by Rev. Dr William Thompson, President of the CBF. Rev. Everton Jackson, pastor of the Calvary Baptist Church in Montego Bay, Jamaica, who earlier this year succeeded Rev. Pinder as the CBF EST, gave the welcome and made expressions.

BWA vice president, Rev. Victor Gonzalez of Cuba brought greet-



Rev. Dr. Thompson

ings on behalf of the BWA General Secretary, Rev. Dr Neville Callam, who was unavoidably absent. Other delegates who brought greetings were Rev. Anthony Carroll, President of the Bahamas National Baptist Missionary & Educational Convention; Rev. Michael Pinder, brother of Peter and District Superintendent – West Grand Bahama District, Zion United Baptist Convention; Rev. Arnold Pinder, President – Grand Bahama Christian Council; and college friend, Gregory Christie.

Special expressions of appreciation were made to Rev. Pinder and his wife, Joycelyn for her support of his ministry to the CBF; and to Helena Cooper who served as Secretary to Rev. Pinder when he was EST. Rev. Peter Changa represented the Guyana Baptist Convention, Yvonne Pitter represented the Caribbean Baptist Women’s Union, and Rev. Edwin Lewis represented the Baptist Union of Trinidad and Tobago. Rev. Karl Henlin of Jamaica made a presentation to Joycelyn Pinder, while Rev. Vincent Wood of Barbados, a former CBF President, expressed appreciation to Helena Cooper on behalf of the CBF.



Rev. Pinder receiving his citation from Mrs. Thompson

Former CBF consultant and former director of Caribbean Christian Publications, Rev. Arthur Edgar, read a citation to Rev. Peter Pinder. The wife of the CBF President, Betty Thompson, presented the framed citation to Rev. Pinder.

In his response, Rev. Pinder said that he was leaving the office a very grateful man. He thanked God for the various experiences that he gained from his association with the churches in the region, and for all that God was doing through the CBF.

The worship service was enriched by a selection,



Cuban Baptists Meet



The following report was received from FIBAC—The Fraternity of Baptist Churches in Cuba.

On November 5, 6, and 7, the Fraternity of Baptist Churches of Cuba (FIBAC) held its Annual Assembly and celebrated its 21st Anniversary. FIBAC is comprised of churches from 12 of the 14 provinces of the beautiful island, which is filled with a happy and united people who are fond of saying that Cuba forms the shape of a giant crocodile in the Caribbean.

FIBAC’s annual assemblies alternate in focus from year to year. One year, those attending primarily conduct fraternity business. On the alternating year, the focus is primarily on the study of a given topic. This year approximately 200 participants gathered in the sanctuary of the Jordan Baptist Church in Guanabacoa, a part of the City of Havana. They represented 37 of the 38 member churches. While the focus this year was upon study, members officially welcomed the 39th member church, the Chambas Baptist Church from Ciego de Avila Province. The Chambas church recently called Rev. Wilson Santana as its pastor. The Fraternity also welcomed the new pastor of the Holguín Baptist Church, Reverend René Rodríguez, who recently passed the ordination examination for admission to the ministry.

At the assembly the president of the Baptist Alliance of Brazil, the secretary general of the Baptist Convention of Nicaragua as well as seven delegates from the Alliance of Baptists from the United States were also welcomed. These brothers and sisters joined with their Cuban family in the proclamation of the word of God.

As another testimony to their interest and commitment to the



proclamation of the Word and the growth of the Kingdom, the Fraternity also reviewed and approved a document titled “The FIBAC Missions Policy”, which outlines goals and objectives for developing new groups of believers.

The Twenty-First Annual Assembly of FIBAC did not serve as an ending point, but only as a point to pause on a path along which Cuban Baptists will continue to meet with each other, share experiences, worship together, and seek new forms of service and ways to strengthen our faith. In November, 2011, FIBAC will gather in the City of Matanzas to pause again along the path of this fraternity, which is strengthened each day by the experiences and insights of its elders and the strength and energy of its youth.



Rev. Pinder contd.

“Order My Steps”, by the United Choir, as well as by “The Redeemed Messengers”, a group which hails from Trinidad. The Redeemed Messengers led in the singing of the Songs of Praise and dedicated to Rev. Pinder the songs, “Love Lifted Me” and “Shall I Forget”. In the group’s tribute, one member spoke of the former EST’s influence on their ministry on one of his visits to Trinidad.

A strong sense of the awesome presence of God permeated the entire worship service. The prayers, scripture readings, and the sermon all called for deep reflection. The congregation “gave up” themselves in worship with lusty singing of hymns such as “Great Is Thy Faithfulness”, “The Right Hand of God”, Take My Life and Let It Be...” and “O Jesus, I Have Promised...”

As the people left the sanctuary for a repast and further fellowship in the church hall, many could not help but reflect on whether we act worthy of God’s call to service.



Mission & Evangelism

HAITI CRISIS – AN OPPORTUNITY FOR INCARNATIONAL MINISTRY

The CBF has been working in partnership with member bodies and the International Mission Board (IMB) in responding to the tragedies that have befallen Haiti resulting from the January 12 earthquake, hurricane Tomas and the outbreak of cholera. The CBF has contributed to date US \$ 13,000.00 to the Baptist Convention of Haiti to assist in their post earthquake and cholera response programmes.

The partnership with IMB has seen the Baptist Convention in the Dominican Republic distributing food, water and tents for temporary shelter as well as providing moral support for relief workers and counseling for survivors and the bereaved. In addition, building teams from the region have been working with IMB to construct 1000 to 1200 houses. So far, a team from Grenada led by Pastor Royston Issacs and another led by Pastor David Serrant from Dominica have spent a week each carrying out construction. Other Conventions/Unions/Associations are urged to participate in this project as the housing needs are great.

The Jamaica Baptist Union (JBU) through its Mission Agency has been making invaluable contributions to the recovery process. They have sent medical and construction teams, a 40ft container of non-perishable food items, bottled water, clothing, shoes and other personal items; medical supplies; rehydration salts and water purifying tablets. In addition they have sent over US \$ 3000.00 to five churches that they have mission partnerships with to assist in their recovery/ response programmes. The JBU Mission Agency partnership with these churches along with five affiliated schools spans from, Port-au-Prince (Petite Place Cazeau) to the south-western community of Anse- a-Veau (Kamonisa and Kafab) and across to the south-eastern community of Les Cayes (Thomasset). The Mission includes re-Aforestation, provision of potable water, school feeding programme targeting 400 children each day, tertiary-level education scholarships for teachers and pastors, provision of a monthly stipend to 20 teachers, periodic medical interventions, and construction of a church sanctuary which will also be used for a school.

The CBF cannot relent at this time in our efforts to alleviate the suffering of our brothers and sisters in Haiti. While we expect the international agencies to play their part, it becomes even more urgent for Caribbean people to stand in solidarity with our Haitian neighbours and mediate the compassion of Christ. May the joy, love and peace of Christmas find expressions in practical endeavours as Caribbean Baptists continue to engage in incarnational ministry in Haiti.



Men's Talk

In October 2010 the Jamaica Baptist Union Brotherhood hosted a Caribbean Men's Conference under the theme "Understanding the Role of the Male in a Changing Society".

The main presentation was made by Professor Errol Miller of the University of the West Indies, who gave a synopsis of the historical development of man and community since God's creation of Adam. He explored the issues of man being the provider, protector, defender and spiritual head of the family, community and country, showing how a number of the man's duties and expectations have changed as civilization developed and spread, and science and technology advanced. He also pointed out that evangelism interactions with men must be genuine and sincere and patterned off Jesus' style which in-

cluded meeting the people where they are.

There were also four workshops on *Restoring Christian Values – a National Challenge* by Rev. Dr. Devon Dick; *Exploring the Masculine side of Evangelism & Outreach* by Rev. Wayan Wellington; *Repositioning the Male towards Understanding and Committing to his role in the family and the nation* by Rev. Franklin Small and *Socio-cultural issues to contend with in Establishing and Maintaining the Gender Balance* by Professor Winston

CBF Notes...

A new way to stay in touch.



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caribbaptistfell@gmail.com

We will soon have our web
page up.



Contact Caribbean Christian Publications (CCP) today to see how you can partner with them to ensure God's word reaches everybody in the Caribbean and beyond. Contact them also for your 2011 Vacation Bible School or Sunday School needs. Caribbean bible lessons for Caribbean people. CCP is an affiliate of the CBF. Send them an email at: info@ccpcbf.org or visit their website <http://www.ccpcbf.org>.

Davidson.

The large gathering of men left with a better understanding of how the church can effectively reach out to men and fired up about the part they can play in doing so.