

# From the Connexional Desk

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## CELEBRATING 250 YEARS OF METHODISM

Council is encouraging all Districts and Circuits within the MCCA to make their own plans to celebrate two hundred and fifty years' Methodist presence in the region. Because the Gilbert Estate in Antigua played a central role in Methodism's history, efforts will be made to further develop the site, with the first phase being the refurbishment of the "ecumenical centre" so that its dormitory facilities are more attractive and its potential as a conference and retreat centre actualized. The involvement of every member of the MCCA is being sought, whether in men and women's groups, youth and young adult organizations, all are invited to consider doing something to revive Gilbert. Some may wish to assume responsibility for the re-decoration of specific rooms within the

centre. The idea of setting up a Connexional work team was floated. An appeal will be launched for every member to contribute at least US\$25 towards the refurbishment project whereby at least US\$1,500,000 could be raised. The intention is for the Gilbert venue to develop into an entity, of historical and ongoing value, of which we will all be proud.



## New MCCA Hymnal

Council received a report on the progress of producing the new hymnal. A sample of the design for the page layout was shared. The end product will be an edition with over 660 hymns, songs, choruses, and national anthems with a variety of musical genres including reggae and calypso, arranged in 31 sections. It will be a blend of the old hymn book and new compositions from the MCCA region

and other parts of the world. It will have a wide ecumenical appeal. 69 entries are translations or originals in 15 languages, truly reflective of our multicultural context. Where possible, the language will be modernized and gender inclusive. The aim is to have copies of the book in our hands by the end of 2009. Two competitions, one for the hymnal title and the other for the cover design concept are now being launched. Entries must be submitted by the end of August 2008.

## SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- *Circuits and Districts begin to make plans to celebrate 250 years of Methodist presence in the region.*
- *New Hymnal to be ready by late 2009.*
- *12 Candidates for Ministry approved by Conference.*
- *Circuits already using Pastoral Performance Review scheme may continue to do so.*
- *Members should be kept informed about the financial state of the Conference.*
- *Full time Connexional Publishing Officer appointed.*
- *Next Youth Encuentro to be held from July 26—August 2, 2010 in Trinidad.*
- *Statement on Gambling approved.*



Hands are laid on Rev. Carmelo Sam-Trotman as he is ordained to the Ministry of Word & Sacrament

## Matters on Ministry

Twelve (12) persons were accepted as candidates for the Ministry of the MCCA. Of these, six (6) will be local presbyters, five (5) will be itinerant presbyters, including one who is a senior candidate and one (1) will be a deacon. On the other end of the spectrum, three (3) presbyters have been granted permission to become supernumerary ministers, while one (1) married deacon who has been without appointment will be returning to full work. With Council's approval, eight (8) ministers were approved for being received into full connexion. A minister of the Panama/ Costa Rica District was ordained to Word and

Sacraments on May 25th. During the month of October, one deacon and three presbyters will be ordained in two separate ceremonies in the Jamaica District. In January 2009, three presbyters will be ordained in the South Caribbean District during the time when their Conference meets. Council also recognized the appointment of Rev. Cuthbert Edwards as the President Designate of the South Caribbean District and expressed its gratitude to Rev. Victor Job, the outgoing District President. The Induction of Rev. Edwards will take place in Barbados on August 31, 2008

NEXT  
CONNEXIONAL  
CONFERENCE TO  
BE HELD IN  
BARBADOS IN  
MAY 2009.

## Cost saving venture

.There will not be a meeting of the Council in November 2008. This is one of the moves adopted by the November 2007 Council in response to cries for saving on our expenditure. As a Church we expend much whenever we hold meetings because we have to rely upon air travel, costly as it is, to bring delegates together. To ensure that the business of the Church continues to be addressed in a timely and efficient manner, more use will be made of the

available technology, e.g. electronic mail and tele-conference meetings where possible.



The District Presidents

## PASTORAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW

Council took note of the findings of a study on the current Pastoral Performance

Review Scheme. The importance of training for those who will administer the review was emphasized. Council agreed that Circuits already using the review scheme may continue to do so, and to take note of any weaknesses that can be rectified. In addressing these a useful workable document will emerge.

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## Financial needs

Council celebrated the fact that there was an encouraging response to the Development Fund Appeal that was launched in May 2007. The proceeds will be used to help fund some of the projects of the Church. At the same time, Council members were reminded that Methodist leaders must redouble their efforts to ensure that members are kept informed about the Church's financial needs for more positive responses to further the mission of the Church. The loss of income from external sources to the region, including the Methodist Church in Britain and the United

Church of Canada, has highlighted the importance of all our members being intentional in their giving as well as members' pooling together to plan investment initiatives and other means of generating income.



Bro. Theodore Fahie,  
Treasurer of the Connexional Funds

## Connexional Publications

Given the urgency of forging ahead and bringing to fruition a number of publication items, such as the new curriculum materials, a new hymnal and a revised prayer book, Council agreed to set aside a minister to work "full time" as the Connexional Publishing Officer. Council took a further step in this direction by appointing the Rev. Paul Douglas-Walfall to undertake the task. Rev. Walfall is currently a Superintendent Minister serving in the South Caribbean District. He has over the

past five years been working steadily and on a part-time basis with relevant committees to produce curriculum materials for use in Church/ Sunday Schools. His new post will take effect from 1 September, 2008.

AS COST SAVING  
EFFORT THE  
COUNCIL WILL  
NOW MEET ONCE  
PER YEAR IN THE  
MONTH OF MAY.

## DEVELOPMENT OF YOUTH WORK

An encouragement was given to Districts and Circuits to further the development of the mission among children, youth, young adults, men and women. Council expressed interest in the work among youth and took note of efforts currently being undertaken to coordinate youth work in the region. Much work is being done in this area by Mr Damien Hughes. He will continue to work under the supervision of the Secretary for Mission, Evangelism and

Education as he seeks to liaise with youth leaders and youth organizations throughout the MCCA. It is hoped that by the next Youth Encuentro (July 26 – August 2, 2010), there will be brought to birth a dynamic youth umbrella organization to co-ordinate youth activities throughout the connexion.



Rev. Victor H. Job,  
Retiring South Caribbean District President



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CARIBBEAN AND THE AMERICAS

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WE ARE ON THE WEB-  
[MCCAONLINE.NET](http://MCCAONLINE.NET)

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THE LOVE OF CHRIST CONSTRAINS  
US!



Connexional Council Members and Observers

May 2008

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## STATEMENT ON GAMBLING

Council approved a Faith and Order document that offers a clear statement on Gambling, identifying what it is and what it is not and outlining ethical principles surrounding it.

The document expresses concern over the alleged negative influences reported to be the experience especially within the Caribbean and suggests reasons why the MCCA will continue to urge its members to steer clear of gambling.

This statement is just one in a series of Faith and Order papers that will be published in the coming months.