



Gospel Dynamics Newsletter

Holiness to the Lord

Volume Four - April to June, 2021

Quarterly Newsletter of the General Assembly of the Church of God in Trinidad and Tobago

There are a few theories as to why birds chirp so lustily in the morning. One theory opines that they sing loud and proud first thing in the morning signalling to everyone within hearing distance that they were strong and healthy enough to survive the night.

For whatever the reason though, this sound early in the morning brings a soothing, peaceful feeling to the listener's ear. It brings a smile to your lips, even as you too acknowledge that you made it through the night; and you are blessed with life to see another day.

It reminds us of the wonder of the God we serve; His majesty, His grace, His mercy, His love...

*"All things bright and beautiful,
All creatures great and small.
All things wise and wonderful,
The Lord God made them all."*

I bring to remembrance that beautiful song taught to us in Sunday School, which was written since 1848, composed by William Henry Monk. Verse one declares:

*Each little flower that opens,
Each little bird that sings,
He made their glowing colours,
He made their tiny wings.*

The final verse reminds us:

*He gave us eyes to see them,
And lips that we might tell.
How great is God Almighty,
Who has made all things well.*

Yes, my Brothers and Sisters of the Household of Faith, as we awake to the

dawn of each New Day, let us remember who we are in Christ Jesus; let us recall the great commission; let us go forth with the bold assurance that the Spirit of God gives utterance to the Children of God; that we walk not by faith; that the steps of the righteous are ordered by God.

We walk with the understanding that our life needs to reflect our Heavenly Father: the hope, peace, joy and so many other unsearchable riches that can be attained only in living a life pleasing onto God.

Someone needs to know our Heavenly Father; and we need to be that "Earthen Vessel" that will tell of our Great Redeemer.

Awake with that commitment each day to *"walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called"*. God has blessed us with life; and in blessing us, He is calling us to be a blessing onto others...

The Psalmist, in Psalm 104 declared:
"I will sing unto the Lord as long as I live: I will sing praise to my God while I have my being."

Let this be one of our daily mantras; knowing that someone needs to "see" this song in the way we live.

Cast aside all doubts and fears, whatever you think your limitations are, be

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*"O Lord, how manifold are Thy works! In wisdom hast Thou made them all: the earth is full of Thy riches."
- Psalm 104: 24*

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reminded that Moses' God is your God.

When God called Moses to go before Pharaoh, Moses felt it necessary to remind God that he (Moses) was "not eloquent; he was slow of speech and of a slow tongue."

Phrased as a question, God reminded Moses that He created all; and in Exodus 4: 12 God instructed Moses as follows:

"Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say."

In everything that we do, let us remember that we are mandated to declare God's Word to the world. Rise each day, seeking God's direction for the day and open yourself to be used by God; declaring the wonder of God to all whom He places within your path.

There is nothing that God will call you to do, that He has not equipped, or is equipping you for.

God bless you.



Managing our Finances - God, Money & Me

Minister Victor Laptiste

One of the greatest challenges facing mankind is his ability to manage finances and other resources— whether personal, family, church, company finances or those of social, cultural and sporting organizations.

It is even a more daunting situation with countries worldwide struggling to balance their National Budget and keep Expenditure in line with Revenues. Many countries now present Budgets with huge deficits (Expenditure far in excess of Income) and resort to borrowing from International Agencies or foreign nations.

Since the pandemic was declared by WHO in 2020 and measures had to be taken which affected economic activity, several business enterprises have collapsed, some are on the verge of bankruptcy, others have restructured by cutting staff and are seeking moratorium on debt repayment. In households, some families are unable to meet their monthly commitments and have applied for loan deferrals.

Credit Card debt is a major threat to financial stability. The temptation to use the Card as an apparent painless solution to satisfy our wants rather than our needs, now makes us slaves to financial institutions. In fact, most of the friction in homes is as a result of the failure of many income earners to manage their resources efficiently and effectively. Expectations are not in line with reality; what their parents took thirty (30) years to accomplish, some desire to achieve within three (3) years. Many are overwhelmed by the luxurious lifestyles portrayed in the social media and develop a strong desire to impress others.

In Romans 13: 1 – 8 we are reminded by the Apostle Paul that we should give to the State (Caesar) what belongs to it and to God what belongs to Him.

Budgeting is one of the major keys to Financial Management: make your Monthly Budget in advance. Expenses would include Tithes/Offerings, Food/Household, Rent/Mortgage, Utilities, Loan, Transport, Medical, Education, Insurance/Investment/Savings, Entertainment/ Social, Fitness, etc.

Here are a few tips:-

- ◆ Saving is essential; save regularly and grow an Emergency Fund.
- ◆ In these tough times we need to prioritize; keep some expenses, reduce others and have the discipline to cut out where necessary.
- ◆ Eating properly, especially some of our home-grown and home-cooked foods can save us food and medical expenses.

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- ◆ Develop life skills; do not rely on one source of income.

It never ceases to amaze me, for instance, how a daily-paid worker who earns less than \$2,000.00 per fortnight (\$4,000.00 monthly) consistently places bets at the play whe/lotto booth in excess of \$100.00 weekly plus additional spending for liquor and cigarettes.

On the other hand, there are 'seasoned Christians' who avoid these vices but fail to give a Tithe or even a decent offering to the work of the Lord, but look for continued grace, blessings and protection from our Almighty God.

**LET US MAKE THESE VERSES A REALITY
IN OUR CHRISTIAN LIVES**

Luke 12: 34

*For where your **treasure** is, there will
your **heart** be also.*

Malachi 3: 8 - 10

*Bring all the **Tithes** ...
I will pour out for you ... **blessings**.*

Psalm 96: 8

*Give to the Lord the glory due His name: bring an
Offering and come into His courts.*

Amen.



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* Realize & Demonstrate Your Talents

It is the hope of the General Assembly of the Church of God in Trinidad and Tobago that this competition will bring to life/understanding among our young people (from a small age), that they were created with purpose and that they are overcomers in Christ.



Gone ... Not Forgotten:

- ◆ Pastor Patrick Snell (*Diego Martin*) passed away on 4th June, 2021. His labour of love will live on through the lives of the many persons led to Christ, as he offered himself in service to God.
- ◆ Sis. Joan Retess (*Princes Town*) departed this life on 9th June, 2021. We thank God for her life and for her love. Her melodious singing and captivating smile will forever be remembered.



May they Rest in Peace.



"Christ First.... everything else after"

Rev. Rollin Bacchus

Hailing from the village of Culloden, is our dear Rev. Rollin Bacchus, who grew up in the Golden Lane Congregation. He is the third of fourteen (14) children, and comes from a well-known family, which has a rich cultural heritage.

His mother, Sarah, was daughter of the first convert in the Golden Lane Congregation in 1925 - Elizabeth "Baby" Irvine - she was a faithful member, and played a key role in the Church and the community.

Rev. Bacchus compiled a book on the traditions of Tobago and has written more than one hundred poems, among them one entitled "Hurricane Flora", which relates the dramatic events which unfolded during that fateful day on September 30, 1963.

He credits the late Pastor Ebenezer Phillips for his spiritual growth and development, as he continuously encouraged him to be steadfast since his early years from conversion at age fifteen (15), his baptism, then his call to Ministry at the age of twenty-seven (27).

As a Member of the Golden Lane Congregation under the leadership of Pastor Ebenezer Phillips, he was given the opportunity to preach his first mini-sermon at one of their open-air services, which were held regularly on Sunday Evenings at various locations throughout Golden Lane, Mt. Thomas, Culloden and other neighbouring communities.

As a young man, he was involved in politics, and having received the nod from the late Prime Minister - Dr. Eric Williams, he became the Candidate for the Golden Lane/Les Coteaux/Mason Hall District. He was elected as a County Councillor; the youngest member in the Tobago County Council; and served for five (5) years.

In 1976, while working as a Night Auditor at Turtle Beach Hotel, Pastor Bacchus had a "Damascus Road" experience along the Arnos Vale Road, where he knelt and began speaking in tongues. He transferred his missionary zeal from politics to the work of the Lord; and in 1977, he enrolled at the West Indies Theological College where he graduated with the Diploma in Theology in 1982.

Pastor Bacchus later pursued the Bachelor of Theology at West Indies Theological College and graduated in 1992. During his studies he conducted extensive research and his Thesis was entitled: "History of the Church of God Movement in Tobago".

After serving as Pastor in Trinidad at Congregations in San Pedro/Poole, St. Charles, Sisters Road, Marabella, and Diego Martin, he was installed as the Pastor at the Church in Lambeau in 1993. Through his Vision, the Church embarked on a development programme with the assistance of a Work Camp led by Paul Yerden of Arizona, U.S.A. The structure was upgraded with the construction of an upper level Sanctuary, which has accommodation for four hundred (400) persons.

This edifice has become the central location for most major activities of the Church in Tobago such as Quarterly Services, National and Regional Conventions, Conferences, Camps and other activities, it also houses the Office of the Tobago Island Council of the Church of God.

In 2015, Pastor Bacchus retired from the Pastorate at Lambeau, leaving a great legacy.

His Ministry has not been limited to the Pastorate, but he exercised his leadership role as the former Chairman of the Tobago Island Council, Chairman of the Board of Evangelism, President of the Trinidad and Tobago Bible Society, Treasurer of the Keswick Convention and also of the General Assembly of the Church of God in Trinidad and Tobago.

Pastor Bacchus' desire for self-development, led him to access extension training courses at the University of the West Indies and the Pacific Lutheran University, obtaining Certificates in Fundamentals of Addiction, Counselling Theories & Techniques, Social Work Assessment and Intervention.

As a trained Counsellor, Pastor Bacchus has counselled several couples in preparation for marriage and in other family situations. Currently, he serves as a Substance Abuse Counsellor in the Division of Health and Social Services.

Service to humanity is his watchword, and in his involvement in community endeavours, he has served as the President of the Vendors Association-Tobago and as a Member of the Tobago AIDS Co-ordinating Committee. He attributes volunteerism as an important aspect of one's self-development and his work with the Tobago Youth Council and the Tobago AIDS Society WE CARE programme is testimony to this fact.

Pastor Bacchus' abiding faith in God has enabled him to overcome several challenges in life, such as the acquisition of a home for his family in Diego Martin just after marriage, and his miraculous recovery from near death experience in 2012.

He is motivated by the writings of George Mueller which emphasize Faith and God supplying all his needs. His evangelistic spirit has never waned, and his desire is to continue working for the Lord wherever He leads. His Motto: "Christ first, everything else after".

As the most senior Church of God Minister in Tobago, Pastor Bacchus desires to see more people come to Christ. Church growth is uppermost in his mind, coupled with the need for greater brotherhood and unity of the Body of the Christ.

United in Prayer for:

Pastor Kelvin Harrinarine; giving God thanks for a successful surgery and for his continued healing.



Sis. Molly Polson (*Mt. St. George*) and Family, on the loss of her grandson Kallel Catterson on 24th April, 2021.

Rev. Alister Bholah and Sis. Joyce Rambajan and Family on the passing of their Sister (Sis. Dyeth) on 17th May, 2021.

Health and Wellness

Taking Care of your Mental Health during the Covid19 Pandemic

- **Sis. Sharon Williams-Gooding** MSW (Dist.)



Life is inevitably filled with numerous challenges which we learn to navigate every day. However, the widespread and catastrophic impact of the Covid 19 pandemic puts it outside the realm of a normal occurrence, and therefore the effects can sometimes create difficulties in coping with problems.

Millions of lives have been touched and changed by illness, loss of loved ones, loss of earnings and isolation from family and friends. Feelings of anxiety, sadness, grief, fear, despair, hopelessness, tiredness and thoughts of suicide can occur during this time.

You may feel overwhelmed and can have difficulty eating, sleeping and attending to daily responsibilities,

such as taking care of yourself and your children. These are normal responses to the present situation and you are not alone; many people all over the world have the same reactions.

During this period, it is necessary to take care of your mental health and recognize that it is just as important as your physical health. Getting enough sleep, eating healthy meals and de-stressing are vital.

Practice some deep breathing: Inhale deeply through your nostrils, as if you are smelling freshly baked bread, perfume, or a flower; now exhale through your mouth, as if you are blowing out candles on a birthday cake. Do this as often as needed to feel calm and relaxed.

Outdoor activities, such as taking short brisk walks and gardening, are also recommended. The fresh air, sunlight and the feel of cool soil in your hands can reduce anxiety, stress and negative mood, leaving you feeling relaxed, peaceful and hopeful.

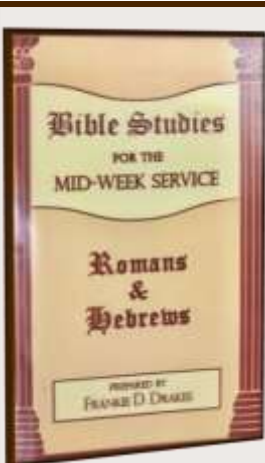
These activities are also excellent for children and can replace excessive time spent on phones and other devices. You should also limit watching, reading and listening to news about Covid to about one hour a day; as excess news could cause you to become worried and anxious. Also, get your information from reliable sources such as news briefings from health officials or the WHO website. Avoid news sources that give false and exaggerated information.

You can spend time reading a book, watching an uplifting movie or playing board games with your children. It is also important to give children opportunities to share their thoughts and feeling about how Covid 19 is affecting them. Some children can better express their feelings by drawing or writing.

As far as possible have a daily routine for you and your family. This helps you to be more organized, gives you a sense of control and makes your day less uncertain and unpredictable.

Although we are advised to socially distance, it is still important to find ways to have social connections. This can be done via phone and social media platforms. I attended a virtual birthday party and it was enjoyable and relaxing. It is especially important to reach out to people who live alone.

Despite your best efforts sometimes your mood does not improve and may even get worst. If this happens, talk to a mental health professional or counsellor at your health centre, hospital, church, or any agency that provides this service.



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Healthy Habits during the Lockdown

In recent times, we have been spending more time at home to reduce the spread of COVID-19. While this measure has increased family time, it has also resulted in a disruption of normal day to day activities and routines. This new normal has featured changes in access and availability to food, unhealthy snacking practices, relaxed schedules, increased screen time for both adults and children, and decreased physical activity. Together, these changes may have even resulted in unwanted and or unhealthy weight gain for many. This can be

remedied using the following tips.

Start a home garden system:

Home gardens increase the availability of food through small-scale production of safe, nutritious foods within walking distance from your kitchen. Be empowered to eat what you grow. It can also be used as a form of physical activity!

Modify recipes to make healthier versions of your favourite foods, snacks and beverages:

This year's theme for National Nutrition Awareness week was "Healthy is the New Normal." This theme encourages you to transform your food environments into healthy food spaces. When preparing your favourite eats and drinks, use

- *Fresh fruits and vegetables:* Using seasonal items can be beneficial. Seasonal fruits and vegetables are usually readily available because they are usually in abundance. This makes them very cheap.
- *Fibre-rich foods:* These include items, such as whole-grain bread, crackers, cereals, brown rice, whole-wheat pasta and ground provision. Dietary fibre is important for our digestive health. It helps you to feel fuller for longer periods, ensures regular bowel movements and has been proven to assist in the lowering of cholesterol and blood sugar levels.
- *Protein-rich foods:* These foods come from both animal and plant sources. Some examples include lean meats, such as chicken, turkey and fish, eggs, low-fat milk and yogurt, cheese, dried peas and beans, nuts, and seeds.
- *Healthy Fats:* Choose healthy fats and low-fat products. These fats can help to reduce your risk of heart disease and other associated complications. Examples of healthy fats include olive oil, avocado, olives, fatty fish (salmon, tuna, mackerel, sardines) as well as nuts and seeds.

Maintain a healthy relationship with food:

Plan ahead! Establish regular meal and snack times to avoid all-day grazing. Aim for three (3) meals and one (1) to two (2) scheduled healthy snacks options each day. When it's time to eat, have a seat at the table and not in front of a screen. That's right. No devices at the table. This way, both you and your children are focused on the food in front of you and are less likely to overeat.

Stick to a routine:

Maintaining a daily schedule can help everyone stick to routines and manage stress levels. Be intentional about everything you do! Set specific times for school/work, reading, meals, exercise, household chores, family time and sleep.

Get Moving! :

Aim for at least 30 minutes of physical activity each day. Make use of virtual exercise classes, go for a walk, you can use light exercise equipment, such as skipping ropes, resistance bands, dumbbells or even try dancing.

Many Happy Returns of the Day



Sis. Eutrice Munroe
Celebrated 91 Years
on 25th April, 2021

Get up and Go...

- Dr. Alicia Martin

~ Ph.D Sociology

COVID-19 has been making waves around the world and has significantly affected life as we once knew it. With increasing work from home, home schooling and the increasing need to cook at home at least within the Trinidad and Tobago context, much has changed. These changes have induced a certain degree of stress in a lot of persons. Stress is related to the hormone cortisol. There are many activities which are geared



toward reducing this hormone, such as DIY projects (Do It Yourself Projects), gardening and exercise. In this article I will focus specifically on exercise as it is deemed to be one of the most effective means by which stress can be counteracted.

We have all become increasingly aware that exercise is highly beneficial to humankind. It helps us to think better, look better, feel better, live better ... However knowledge does not easily translate into actual physical activity. In fact, some of us have tonnes of reasons why we are yet to incorporate this good thing into our weekly schedules. Below is a list of common excuses coupled with some simple solutions. Note that these solutions are presented in a faith context that we shall return to some form of normalcy soon.

“I am just too busy!”

With traffic (though there should be less of it these days), online home schooling, side jobs, evening classes, spouses, household responsibilities and demanding jobs, it’s difficult to add another element to our dangerously over-packed schedules. However, exercise begs to be included in our list of ‘must do’ things and it is ultra-important that it is incorporated into our lifestyles as all the other activities. Note that your goal may not necessarily be to become the next Usain Bolt, Dwayne Bravo or Serena Williams (not knocking the dreamers! Go for it if that’s your reality!). Instead your desire might be to get your heart rate up, tone, lose weight, or de-stress. There are many relatively short workouts which cater to these goals. Check YouTube, consult a trainer who is working online, use your free weights (note that you can improvise). Get at least 15 minutes in per day! You can do it! You won’t regret it! Do get the guidance of a qualified physician (a medical doctor and/or qualified fitness trainer) before you begin though. That won’t hurt either!

“It’s too costly!”

With ever-piling bills and the intimate impact of a recession, coupled with meagre incomes, many persons have resigned themselves to a belief that they just cannot cover another debt. But who said you have to go to the gym or hire a personal trainer? Be innovative. Take up a sport. Get some DVDs, make Google and YouTube your best friends. Cut costs by running or walking in the nearby park. Do it with your children if you have to. Keep them in sight and work up a sweat. Very importantly, sweat. Can’t afford free weights? Then fill some bottles with sand. Remember that we as a country, boast the only musical invention of the 21st Century; the steelpan. We are innovators. Put your mind to it and make it happen.

“I’m too old for all that!”

Age is just a number! The reality is that some persons over the age of 60 may have already begun to experience joint and other body pains and so they are hesitant to become too physical. However nobody said that one had to become ‘too’ physical. For instance water aerobics and tennis are excellent activities for the elderly members of our population. In fact within recent times, community groups have been initiating yoga and aerobics classes for their retired residents. Go in search of the schedule or become a pioneer for such activities in your own community. Other than that, walk! Walk your dog, your grandchildren or walk with your spouse. Just walk!

“I’m too young for that!”

Thinking that you can or should start to exercise when you are leaning more to middle aged status is a major mistake. Young persons of primary, secondary and tertiary levels should be especially encouraged to exercise because of the benefits which it provides for persons who are engaging in studies. Exercise is a major de-stressor and some of the emotional and social struggles that are experienced during adolescence can be better managed. Additionally, lifestyle diseases such as diabetes have been affecting younger populations. As a result, the wise young person would engage in sport or some other form of physical activity in order to achieve a greater sense of wholeness and wellness, and to increase the probability that he/she would live long into adulthood.

“I don’t need to exercise! I already look good ... it’s in my genes!”

As mentioned, exercise is not exclusively geared toward improving one’s physical appearance. It’s also about social, psychological and physiological wellness. Work toward discarding these myths and ill-informed opinions! The endorphins alone will be enough to make you question why you had not jumped aboard the fitness train sooner! Knowledge without application is dead. Wisdom - the application of knowledge - is life...literally. Now let’s get physical shall we!

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