

## Farewell & Service of Celebration for the work of the Rev. Dr. Colin Cowan

The Rev. Dr. Colin Cowan, outgoing General Secretary of the United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands, and his family were given a resounding send off by the Church at a Service of Farewell and Celebration at the Webster Memorial United Church in Kingston Jamaica on Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> December 2010. Twelve friends and colleagues from the United Church Regional Mission Council and Congregations in Cayman travelled to Jamaica to join in the Celebration and in the expressions of appreciation and farewell to them. While all the Regional Mission Councils, including Cayman, joined in the gift presented by the Church, a souvenir of Cayman, made for the occasion by Mrs. Carmen Conolly of East End, was also presented to them, "to remind them of the prayers, pride and love of their friends in Cayman that would accompany them on their new journey". The Rev. Dr. Cowan takes up the post of General Secretary of the Council for World Mission from the 1<sup>st</sup> January 2011 and they expect to move to London as soon as all Immigration requirements have been completed.

The Sermon was preached by the Rev. Dr. Gordon Cowans, who quipped that people often thought of them as brothers though the 'poor man (Collin) had never had an 's' to his name!' Just as well, he added, as no mother's heart could endure the pride of having two sons in the Clergy! After then eliciting hearty laughter from the congregation with a couple of jokes on this subject, he led everyone into serious contemplation of what this new journey meant not only for Dr. Cowan but the whole United Church, in having one of its own chosen for this role in the world church. He focused his theme on the words "... and they accompanied him (Paul) to the ship" from the text in Acts 20.

In his tribute on behalf of the UCJCI, Moderator the Rt. Rev. Henley Bernard noted that Dr. Cowan "has distinguished himself by the breadth of his competence and the depth of his commitment." The Rev. Gary Harriott, as General Secretary of the Jamaica Council of Churches, also brought greetings and commendations. He added that "We are proud and feel blessed to know that the Jamaican church is continuing the great tradition of providing leadership to the global church." The Prime Minister of Jamaica also sent warm greetings, which were read by the Hon. Dorothy Lightbourne, Minister of Justice. In his response, the Rev. Dr. Cowan warmly thanked all who attended and brought greetings and other expressions. He thanked the Church for journeying with him over all the years and for the opportunity to serve as he was able to and noted that the Church was ready for this new step. In an interview published separately and distributed at the Service, Rev. Cowan spoke of his "passion for justice", saying that "God invites us to be in relationship so that together with God, we can make a difference in the world. I have a passion for that, because I believe that outside of that we have little energy." As we bid him, Michelle, Christopher and Mona 'au revoir', we know that by God's sustaining grace, Dr. Cowan will bring that same energy and passion to the global ministry of CWM.



Above - Rev. Dr. Collin I. Cowan (right) greets Rev. Norbert D. Stephens, his successor as General Secretary of the United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands