



## **Sabbath School Department**

### **DIRECTOR: Pastor Everett Smith**

The Sabbath School Department of Central Jamaica Conference started out as the place where the members of the church were instructed in the Word of God. Pastor Edwin Hyatt, Past President, of the Conference, pioneered the Sabbath School through its early years. Much emphasis was placed on the study of the lesson, support for mission through Investment, Birthday Offerings, weekly Sabbath School Offerings, and Thirteenth Sabbath Offerings. Millions of dollars have been contributed by our members in support of missions. Miss Parchment continued after Pastor Hyatt to cement the Sabbath School work. It was then that the Conference Committee voted to establish Sabbath School Federations in the parishes to foster the Sabbath School work.

Today the Sabbath school continues as one of the most organized departments in the local churches. Thanks to the superintendents all over Central who supported the various departmental leaders over the years; B. L. Henry, Grover Hyatt, J.P. Wesley, Stevel Beckford, Joseph Hutchinson, Fitz Mighty, M. St. E. Grey who have conveyed to them the plans, projections in Unit Evangelism, Branch Sabbath School etcetera to keep the Sabbath School - the heart of the church.

From the very inception of the Conference, the Lay Activities Department or Home Missionary, as it was know then, began to organize and train church members to witness in various ways of the love of God. In this Department as in Sabbath School, Pastor Hyatt let out followed by Pastor Basil Henry (now Deceased), J. A. Allen, and A. L. Lyle. During the early 60's laymen were organized for preaching the Word, the Dorcas Department, that later became the Welfare Society and now Community Services Department, was organized to serve the needy case and the funds gleaned from the Annual Ingathering conducted by the church was used to carry on this work.

In December 1966 the Conference Committee voted to form a Layman's Federaton in each parish, as in Sabbath School and Youth, to have men and women band together for training and preaching the Word. While the action was not carried through in total, the laymen were not left without training, because institutes were conducted yearly to train laymen to preach and teach the Word.

During the 70's particularly when Pastor Grover Hyatt served the Department, a series of intensive training was conducted by Elder K.G. Vaz of West Indies union to equip men and women to serve as Lay Evangelists, Lay Preachers and Lay Bible Instructors with the necessary certificates to prove their training. The training continued under Elder H.R. Bennett of West Indies Union. These resulted in the massive evangelistic explosion of the eighties when the laymen joined with the pastors to win souls for the kingdom of God.

After Pastor G. S. Hyatt, the Department was serviced by Pastors D.E. Kent, J.M. Hutchinson, F.H.E. Mighty, and presently W. Palmer. Over the years the sisters in the Welfare Department were uniformed, they rallied at every disaster in the Conference to give assistance. The 1986 June flood saw probably the high point of the Welfare Work as the church rallied to supply bales of food, clothing, and bedding to the devastated areas. The Ingathering funds were well utilized over the years to effect this work. The members year after year rallied to reach their goals which were increased yearly.