



## St. Joseph now without a Parish Church

Nothing lasts forever. Almost everyone has heard that overused phrase (cliché) before, but for the loyal, devoted, and committed congregation of the St. Joseph Parish Church, their treasured edifice could have gone for another 100 years.

It certainly won't go that distance, as the land on which the church sits, continues to slip and slide.

As a consequence, the Trustees of the Diocese of Barbados, have agreed to build a new church on another site in the parish.

The news was announced by Chair of the Trustees, Dr. Hartley Richards, at a specially invited meeting at the Grantley Adams Memorial secondary school on July 24. He said members would continue to share fellowship at the St. Aidan's church.

After a recent celebration of mass at St. Aidan's, parishioners told **THE ANGLICAN** how they missed their old "home"

### Mrs. Denise Massiah: (Rector's wife)

It is so sad to drive past the St. Joseph Parish Church on the way here to St. Aidan's. St. Joseph has become so dear and special to the family over the years, and it is a real hurtful feeling to look upon the building that was our spiritual home for so many years. I pray daily for our parishioners and everyone associated with the new project. I have every confidence, God willing, St. Joseph will rise again and soon.

### Norma Layne: (Over 80)

I have been at St. Joseph all my life. From a tiny tot to someone who has reached four-score years, so you know how badly I miss the Parish Church. It was like a home away from home for me, and I look forward to the day when we will have a new church to replace the old building. But having said that, St. Aidan is quite good and we have to carry on our worship until the new church comes.



**DENISE MASSIAH**



**NORMA LAYNE**



**CEPHAS RUSSELL**



**SONIA MAYERS**



**YVONETTE BARROW**

## PARISHIONERS LAMENT LOSS OF SPIRITUAL HOME



**SHIRLEY FORDE**



**SHERRIL LAYNE**



**KEMAR CUMBERBATCH**



**COTTRESS JORDAN**



**FRED CLARKE**

### Cephas Russell: (Choir and Church Warden)

I have two homes and one is St. Joseph Parish Church. You know something . . . I have not missed a service at the St. Joseph Parish Church during the past 15 years. I was confirmed there 50 years ago, and come to think of it, I have served under several rectors, some of whom have gone to the great beyond: Fr. Woodruff, Fr. Dickenson, and Fr. Crawford. I visited the Parish Church's site recently and the memories came flowing back, but I am anxiously looking forward to the day when we will be back in full communion at the new Parish Church

### Sonia Mayers (Usher)

You know what it is like to be in one place all your life and then you have to move to somewhere else. Well that is exactly how I feel when I think of the St. Joseph

Parish Church. I have not worshipped anywhere else ever since baptism. I have been there. Once the doors are opened, I am going to be in there, so now the doors are closed, I missed worship and all the things that we shared there as a family. I hope we get going on the new Parish Church very quickly.

### Yvonne Barrow (Usher / Church Army)

For more than 50 years I have been going there almost every time the bell rings to call members to worship. To tell you how badly I miss the Parish Church is to explain to you that every Sunday on my way here to St. Aidan's, I have to pass there and I look and look at the old girl who will soon be no more. St. Joseph Parish Church is very dear to me and no doubt will always be. But we have to move on and I know with God's help, we

are going to get a new church, and we all be back together again.

### Shirley Forde (Usher)

If you mention St. Joseph Parish Church, you have to mention me. That is how close we have been for more than 50 years. There is a sense of belonging when it comes to St. Joseph Parish Church. Indeed, the rectors over the years would have told you whether it poured rain, or a day of lovely shine, if there are two persons present, one is Shirley. I miss St. Joseph Parish Church, but I know it is making way for a new parish church, and I am looking to that day.

### Sherril Layne (District Visitor)

I came through the choir, the Youth Leader programme, and now serving as District Visitor. For 48 years, St. Joseph Parish Church has been

part of me and not a part that you could easily take away. So if the old Church is no longer functional, then I am bound to miss it dearly. You know I have always said God is a strong hold and a tower, and I have every confidence he will help us through...

### Kemar Cumberbatch (Parochial Church Council Member and Altar Server)

I know I am a young man, but for the past 24 years, ever since my baptism and confirmation, St. Joseph Parish Church has been an unmovable influence in my life. Of course, I miss the Parish Church and may I add, sorely. However, I am aware that the old has to give away to the new and with God's help and the support of our tireless church family, we are going to have a new Parish Church.

### Cottress Jordan (Usher)

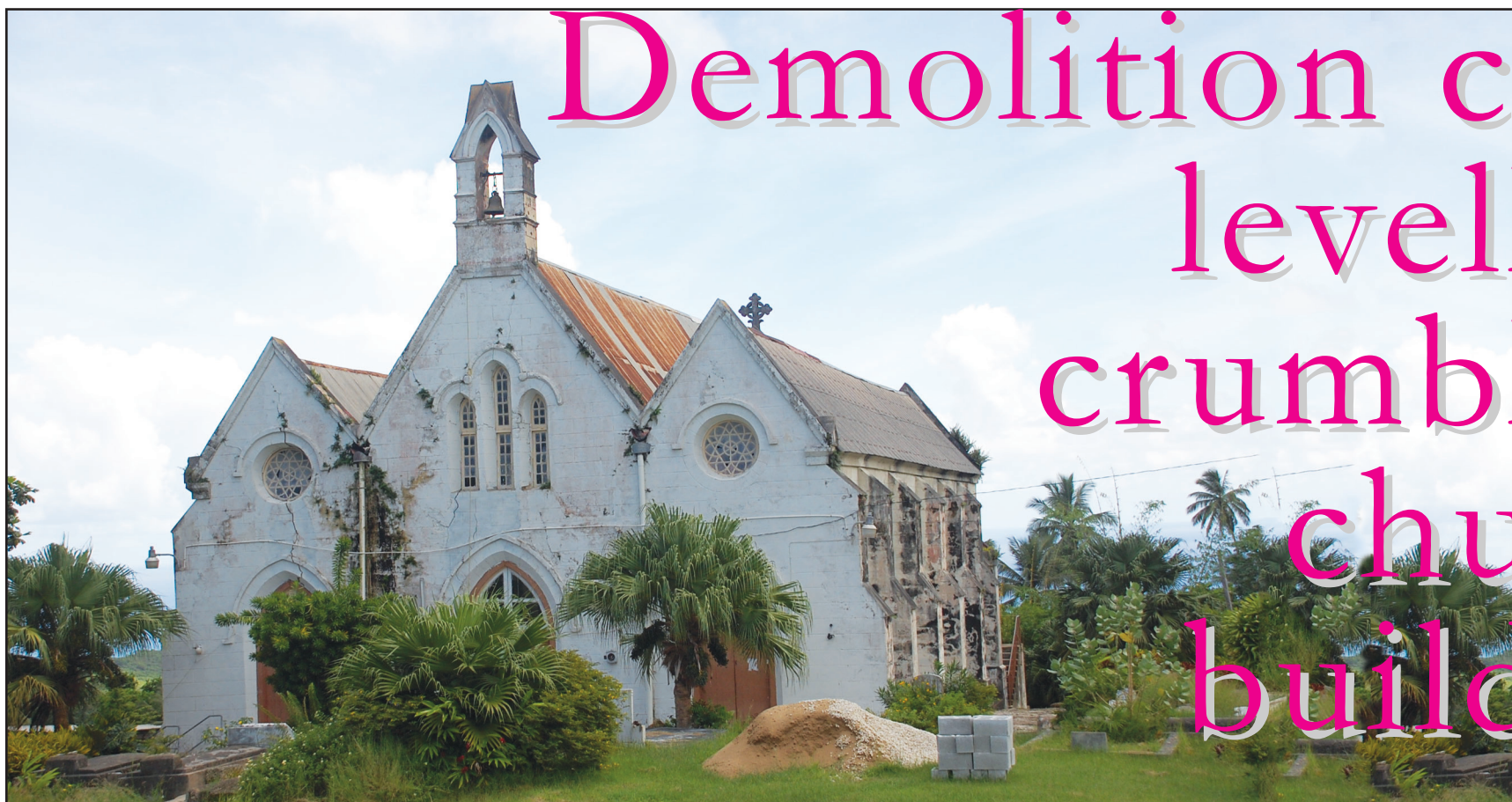
Every time I approach the old Parish Church as I make my way from Sugar Hill to St. Aidan's, I get the feeling that I have passed my dearest friend who cannot be with me anymore. And that says how badly I miss St. Joseph Parish Church. For 24 years the Parish Church has been my place of worship and there is a bond that cannot be matched.

However, we have to move on and I am looking and waiting for the day to dawn when we get our new church.

### Fred Clarke (96 years oldest member)

As a boy I never thought we would have to build a new Parish church. But you know how the ground slides and slips over there, so they have to move, and build a new church. St. Aidan's is a lovely place, and I welcome everybody who comes here.





# Demolition crew levelling crumbling church building



**Reverend Errington Massiah administering communion to a Mrs. Millicent Cave on her 95th birthday (July 28, 2012).**

Another phase in the demolition of the St. Joseph Parish Church started on August 1, when the organ, pulpit and other valuables were removed from the 165-year old edifice.

The removal was a signal to parishioners that the building will soon be leveled to the ground; a building which holds many of their important memories - happy memories of worship, their baptisms, confirmations and weddings, plus bitter sweet home goings for their departed loved ones.

However, they were not surprised by the turn of events. Over the last few years they had wrestled with cracks in the church walls caused by land slippage that is a feature of the Scotland District. In 2007, when Barbados was affected by earth tremors, the building received fur-

ther structural damage, which was exacerbated during the passage of **Tropical Storm Tomas** in October 2010.

Last June, the building was deemed unsafe and worship for St. Joseph's congregation was shifted to St Aidan's, its sister church in the twin cure of which Rev. Errington Massiah is rector.

Recently, the Board of Trustees - which is responsible for property owned by the Diocese of Barbados - and other church officials held a town hall meeting to discuss the policies and procedures for St. Joseph's decommissioning. It was announced that a new St. Joseph Parish Church would be built at a site yet to be identified.

The meeting was told that on the advice of a team of experts, the church officials had

worked out several logistics which would allow them to salvage crucial, historic and sentimental items, including inventory, the pulpit, the altar and stained windows.

It was also stated that plans were been made "to prepare the building for demolition in the safest way imaginable, so that none of (the church's) neighbours would be affected," and the parishioners were thanked for supporting the church.

"The St. Joseph Parish Church has not lacked for your financial and human support. It has not fallen short of spiritual guidance, so ably administered by those who served over the years, (including the) outstanding contribution of your Rector Father Errington, who has given more than 25 years of fine service.

## Millicent Cave remembers St. Joseph's church

"I really sorry about what happening with St. Joseph; they say they may have to lick it down. I wouldn't like it to get lick down," Mrs. Millicent Cave said.

The depth of her connection with the Anglican church was evident not only from her words but from the timbre of her voice as well.

"I heard something about the left side . . . I wonder if they couldn't . . ." her voice trailed off as she seemed to mull over the solutions.

"If it is to fall down they should let it fall down. But the Lord knows; whatever will be; will be. I can't do much because I am not getting young," she

added.

At 95, Mrs. Cave is one of the oldest active St. Joseph parishioners and like all the members of the congregation, she now worships at St. Aidan's but she carries a chest full of fond memories of her days at St. Joseph, her home church from birth.

"My family, the Walkers and the Coxes in that graveyard . . ." she exclaimed.

She also recalled her confirmation; the days of worship presided over by Reverends Moore and Hutchinson; the carolling and sweet-praising of God at midnight mass or five o'clock service at

Christmas time; the bountiful harvests.

"My grandmother taught me how to love and care for my place of worship. She was blind and I remember her. She would go up the alley with her walking stick - wasn't many roads like now - and someone would help her get to the church door . . . and she would dust the whole church."

Mrs. Cave, whose mother died when she was just over four, went to live with her grandmother and aunt therefore this example she treasured as well as followed.

"I had a motor car for 44 years. I would collect people and we would go

and help clean up the church," she recalled. That clean-up included the brass every two weeks.

"The communion rails, the eagle . . . the Williams from Blackmans and the Woods from Frizers gave the church a lot towards that brass and other things."

Mrs. Cave also ensured that the graveyard was sprayed. "I sold my car and now I can't do much, I getting young . . . but I wouldn't like to see that beautiful church where we worship get lick down."

