



*Senator the Honourable Donna Cox*  
**Minister of Social Development & Family  
Services**

**Golden Anniversary Celebrations**  
*of the*  
**Laventille Open Bible Standard Church**

**Thursday November 10, 2022**

Brothers and Sisters, I greet you in the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. It is indeed a pleasure to be here to bring greetings to you on the celebration of your Golden, 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. Anniversary celebrations such as these provides us with the opportunity to look back at how far the Church has come and how the Church has impacted lives and contributed to the transformation of our community. It also provides an opportunity to look forward to all the blessings the Lord still has in store for you as a Church, as you continue to do His work. Brothers and Sisters, 50 years since the establishment of the Church is a major achievement and you must praise God for this Changing Season and for Him being an Unchanging God.

Noting the theme for your Anniversary as '*Changing Seasons, Unchanging God*', I must acknowledge the dedication of your previous Pastors, Rev. Benjamin Hunte, Rev. Dr. Benjamin Agard and Rev. Dr. Charles Alexis, as well as other founding members, for their pioneering efforts in developing this church as a landmark in this community.

Brothers and Sisters, this Anniversary Celebration is an opportunity to not only look back at how far you have come as a church community but also to look forward to all the blessings the Lord still holds for you as you continue to do His work.

I did not know that I was one of the early members of this Church. I only realized this when I saw the number of years that the Church is celebrating today. I recognize that around the time Laventille Open Bible Church was established I began attending Sunday School here as a child because Granny was in charge of the Sunday School and she brought me with her.

While attending Sunday School I realized that I wanted to come to Church here. One day, I told my mother that I wanted to start going to Church with granny on mornings and I wanted God, I wanted to accept Jesus Christ. I recall my mother saying to me, you could go but you have to do your confirmation in the Anglican Church first. I said, okay. On Sunday mornings, I went to the small Anglican Church on the opposite side of the road for confirmation classes. I remember walking down the road, holding granny's hand, and how happy I was to come here to Sunday School religiously at 3 p.m. every Sunday afternoon with Granny, Rhona and Junior Burrows. Those of you who were here from the beginning will remember them. Some of the families I remember were the Dedier's, Belgrove's, Guerra's, De Coteau's.

As a child, I was filled with the Holy Spirit. I remember Pastor Hunte pointed at me as I was shaking and said to the congregation, *“Under the cover of the Holy Spirit, if you all have faith as this child you will see God move mightily on your behalf.”*

I saw many lives changed, many persons transformed, many persons delivered. I understood deliverance from an early age.

I remember seeing Pastor Hunte walking through the Church and when he walked through demons cried out. I saw him stop at a row of benches and observed that demons started to bawl and flee. There are a lot of Christians today, who would have never seen this type of ministry under the anointing and leading of the Holy Spirit that I experienced as a child.

I always remember the good times I had when I went to carnival camp. When I got home I was so tired that I could not even go to school on Ash Wednesday. My mother always wanted to know what you all were doing at camp. She could not wake me up Ash Wednesday. I always told her it was because I had such a good time in camp. I am so proud to say that Laventille Open Bible Standard Church impacted my life during most of my formative years and contributed to my decision to serve Jesus Christ as my Lord and Saviour. The experiences I had here significantly impacted my life and this Church will always have a special place in my heart. I am sure there are many more persons with a testimony like mine.

The theme of your week long Anniversary Celebrations is ‘Changing Seasons, Unchanging God’. In this country we have two seasons: dry season and rainy season.

These seasons bring observable changes in nature. No matter how much we may like the dry season, we all know it comes to an end and the rainy season begins in June.

However, seasons can change suddenly, this is also clearly identified in the Bible:

- In Exodus 14, the children of Israel suddenly transitioned from slaves in Egypt to free persons in the wilderness. God delivered them from the hands of Pharaoh. Their season suddenly changed from bondage to freedom;
- Joseph, who was a prisoner in Egypt arising out of false accusations made by Potiphar's wife, he became the Prime Minister under Pharaoh after interpreting his dreams (Gen. 41:46). Suddenly, his season changed from sleeping in a prison to dining in the Palace;
- In the Book of Acts 16:25-26, we read how Paul and Silas were imprisoned and suddenly there was a great earthquake that shook the foundations of the prison and immediately all the doors were opened and everyone's bands were loosed. Again, this is another example of how quickly seasons can change.

One consistent theme with the children of Israel, Joseph, Paul and Silas' experience is God was with them through all the sudden changes in seasons. Psalm 102:27 says, "*But You are the same, And Your years will have no end.*" While seasons change, we can be assured that God remains the same. He is the same yesterday, today and forever.

We must also be ever mindful of the scripture verse I saw each time I came to Church here – **Jesus Christ, the same yesterday and today and for ever** (Hebrews 13:8).

On behalf of the Ministry of Social Development and Family Services, I congratulate the Laventille Open Bible Church on your 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and pray that you will continue to build the Kingdom of God for His honour and glory. Please be assured that you have the Ministry's support and that of the Government of Trinidad and Tobago, as we work together to help, empower and transform the lives our citizens and communities. We are living in changing and uncertain times but we are thankful we serve an unchanging, certain God.

Stay faithful, stay focused and always remember seasons change, people change, time changes. We live in an uncertain world but remember, we serve a certain God.

May God bless you.

May God bless Laventille Open Bible Standard Church,

And may God bless our Nation.

I thank you.