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Judicial Staffer Heeds the Call

Local-serving Judicial Administration staffer Janis McLaughlin (pictured below) will tally her cash for the last time on Wednesday (30 September) when she answers to a higher calling. Ms McLaughlin will become a full-time minister of religion.

Ms McLaughlin has served as one of the cashiers at the Finance counters of the Court Administration for 13 years. She has been with the courts for more than 18 of the 25 years of her civil service career.

Speaking of his pride in Ms McLaughlin's dedication since he arrived four years ago, Court Administrator Kevin McCormac said: "Our Finance Centre deals with a huge volume of payments coming in for a variety of reasons (sometimes from people who really do not want to pay!). It is a real tribute to Janis that she has handled so much money from so many people for so long with such skill and efficiency – she will be missed by many of our regular customers as well as by us all."

Commenting on her time at the courts, which she joined as an Clerical officer in March 1997, later becoming an Executive Officer, she said it was "quite amazing to see the progress" that has taken place in procedures and processes over the years, adding that she hoped that this positive trend would continue. In particular, she said, she hoped that the JEMS technology system would become more fully and widely utilised across the administration. It is a concern she had embraced – the greater integration of technology in the workplace – throughout her time in the civil service.

"When I go to a department, I like to make a difference," said the consummate civil servant who joined the civil service in January 1990. Starting as a switchboard operator, she soon moved into filing where she quickly challenged her peers to think about ways in which they could work smarter. "I like to work better, not harder," she said.

Recognising Ms McLaughlin's dedication, her supervisor, Ms. Lillian Curbelo-Bush Administrative & Finance Manager of the Judicial Financial Centre, said: "It has been an immeasurable pleasure working with Janis. She has been an important member of the Judicial Administration's Financial Centre for the better part of 14 years and, prior to that, Government as a whole for many more years."

Ms Curbelo-Bush acknowledged that it was very difficult to bid farewell to someone who is so valued and respected in their small section, but added: "However, her future ambitions are the most admirable and we certainly cannot compete with her purpose in life."

She thanked Ms McLaughlin for the positive example she maintained, arriving on time, being reliable, and always cheerful. “Her resignation will be felt for a very long time; employees like Janis are very rare,” she said.

This dedication, as she applied her mind to improving the workplace, has been a guiding principle throughout her career, said Ms McLaughlin, as she adopted a thankful, uncomplaining and willing attitude.

“I give God thanks. I started with three young children and my supervisors gave me opportunities to prove myself. I am grateful, and whatever hurdles came up, I trusted in God and He always gave me grace to see me through. And I have always been willing to try.”

She will no doubt be taking this same approach into her new career path when she joins the full-time ministry beside Bishop Oral McLaughlin of the Eastern Apostolic Church in East End.

She takes similar commitment to this new role as full-time minister of the Gospel, and already has a wealth of experience, having had 14 years’ practice, including ordination as a minister in May 2011.

The natural question for many is what led this East End mother of five and career civil servant toward this unusual career path, and why now?

Minister McLaughlin traces the genesis of her commitment to the miracles she saw evolving in the life of one of her young sons, today 18 years of age and preparing to travel overseas to take up a course in auto mechanics. He had been born with a number of medical concerns, and the challenges just kept coming, she said. It soon became more than the young mother could handle, so she prayed, and prayed, and prayed.

“I found Christ in the crisis,” she said, and despite the resistance of people around her, she persevered in her trust in God and faith that her son would overcome the challenges. Against the odds, her son graduated primary school and, most daunting of all, high school.

By then, the brood had increased to five. She struck a pact with God – “I said to God, ‘If you help me to raise these children to where they can stand on their own,’” she said, “I would dedicate my life to His service.”

Her youngest, a daughter, is now in nursing school and working part-time.

“It is now time to fulfil the promise I made to God,” she said, adding: “I believe that if I could get results praying for my own children, I can pray for others” with equal success.

Over the years, however, she did not rest on the promises of the Bible alone, she worked at equipping herself. Pursuing a counselling degree from the online Rockville University, she graduated with distinction in 2007.

She anticipates that her first stop on her new mission will be a trip to a Women’s Retreat in the Unites States. She will also be travelling to Jamaica and Honduras to visit branches of her

church there, she said. But her main focus will be to support the work of Bishop McLaughlin in her primary mission field, the Cayman Islands.



Above: In the middle is Janis McLaughlin with, from left to right, Court Funds Officer Roseita Ebanks, Accounts Officer Charmaine Bodden, Finance Centre Manager Lillian Curbelo-Bush and fellow cashier Janwanda Evans-Weakley

Below: Ms. Janis



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